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TYPOLOGICAL MEMOIRS**

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PROVERBS ON ANIMAL IDENTITY: TYPOLOGICAL MEMOIRS

Arvo Krikmann

1. THE LAW OF FOLKLORIC FEEDBACK AND ‘TYPE THICKETS’

Once folkloristics abandons its presently prevailing context-oriented approaches and returns to studying folklore texts (I am convinced that it is bound to happen sooner rather than later), it will face numerous problems which have remained unsolved on the previous turn of spiral. One of them concerns the typological consistence and structure of folkloric genres. Below I will make an attempt to elucidate some aspects of the problem on the example of a single genre (*proverbs*) and a single notion (*proverb type*). Paremiology and paremiography thus far have used primarily printed proverb publications (and earlier manuscriptal collections) and/or archival manuscript material as their sources. Not many nations boast extensive folkloric archives. Two conceptions about the typological nature of proverbs have become dominant, partly due to the nature of source material:

(1) Proverbs are clichés, always used in fixed, settled form. This viewpoint is most expressively manifest in the works of **G. Permiakov** (for example, 1968: 9 ff; 1970: 9 ff; 1979: 11 ff). **John Lyons**, one of his contemporaries, has also grouped proverbs together with some other types of expressions under the category of ‘*ready-made*’ utterances, maintaining that such expressions “permit no extension or variation” (1971: 177). Similarly, **I. Galperin** (1971: 179–181) has argued that proverbs are variable primarily as a result of writers’ (sic!) individual modification and paraphrasing, as opposed to ‘*their fixed form (the traditional model)*’, which is considered invariable.

(2) The Finnish school, whose main objective was to ascertain the original form, time and place of origin and distribution routes of folkloric units as distinctive types (runo song types, fairy tale-types, etc.), believed that the diachronic development of folkloric units

could be traced in the variation of texts. Folkloristic studies grown out from or influenced by the Finnish school still support the view that proverbs, like any folklore types, appear in actual language usage as variants, but the variation is limited and in principle the typological landscape is discrete. According to this conception, tradition as such resembles a thin forest, where trees are branched and the branches of some neighbouring trees might even be intertwined, but it is clear (or at least it is possible to determine) where each branch stems from.

Kaiser und Abt (1923), a monograph by **Walter Anderson**, is one of the fundamental works on the Finnish method, which is significant for elucidating the history of the folk tale type AT 922, but also for formulating the law of folkloric feedback (or self-regulation, or stability), *das Gesetz der Selbstberichtigung*, which, in essence, is briefly the following. Variations of folk tales are surprisingly undeviating from certain limits and the story will never change beyond recognition, even if its life-span is very long and its circulation wide. According to Anderson, this is caused by the fact that the narrator has generally heard the tale from not one but from many different narrators, and has also heard it on various occasions from the same narrator; all random fluctuations which might drastically differ from the basic story are thereby suppressed, and the tale reassumes its basic form, ‘flows back to its original streambed’.

Chapter 3 in the book *Sissevaateid folkloori lühivormidesse I* (Krikmann 1997) discusses the peculiarities of the law of folkloric feedback in proverbs and draws attention to the special paradoxical status of proverb lore on the background of other folklore:

On the one hand, proverbs and proverbial expressions are short and ‘formulaic’ (in terms of their euphony, characteristic syntax forms, etc.) and the number of their actualisations, and therefore also the number of instances of re-hearing is definitely larger than that of some folk song or tale: thus, they appear to be more securely protected by the law of stability than longer units.

Conversely, any larger corpus of proverbs (the Estonian archival material, for instance) contains a number of examples, where the law of stability will probably fail. ‘Different proverbs’ start intertwining through links of various types of hybrid forms. We might

even encounter vast typological ‘thickets’, where the texts situating at the ‘different edges’ of the thicket bear almost no resemblance to each other, while the thicket as a whole is extremely coherent: to move ‘from edge to edge’ we must pass through numerous intermediary stages, each of which has its close and very similar neighbours. It seems preposterous even to ask where the ‘variants of one proverb’ end and the ‘variants of another proverb’ begin, or how many ‘different proverbs’ could be found within such a thicket. Moreover, it is paradoxical that the formulaic short proverbs appear to be subject to typological hybridisation far more often than the longer textual units ‘in prose form’. This, too, can be explained: typological identity of short texts is more vulnerable, because it has less lexical ‘fulcra’, a smaller range of discretion, and the substitution of each lexical element changes the impression it leaves considerably; whereas a longer text has more lexical means to cement its identity, and changes are less disastrous for its typological self-preservation.

Certainly, the problem is not the different size (productivity) of typological units: as a rule, a typologically discrete paremic landscape also consists of the sc. cities, towns, boroughs, villages and single farms, as is commonly known by all paremiologists. The problem arises when we discover that we are dealing with a metropolis consisting of, say, three concentric zones divided into 8 sectors by the principle points of the compass: the inner circle is inhabited, say, by people; the outer circle by birds in the northern sector, fish in the southern sector, insects in the eastern sector and snakes in the western sector, bird-snakes in the north-western sector and fish-insects in the south-eastern sector; the middle zone by human-bird-insects in the north-eastern sector and human-fish-snakes in the south-western sector, etc. (topologically, of course, the above metaphor is a crude simplification, as besides figurative lexica we also have to consider the logical form of the sentence, traditional ‘syntax figures’, modalities, euphonic characteristics, etc.).

This understanding must have been extremely inconvenient for researchers of proverbial taxonomy, including compilers of proverb publications with the basic typological level. Such publications attempt to overlook (or elude) the existence of typological mazes and still present the material as a linear sequence of discrete types. This is the case with the academic publication of Estonian proverbs

Eesti vanasõnad (EV), the publication of Lithuanian proverbs *Patarlių paralelės* supplemented with abundant comparative European material, compiled by **Kazys Grigas** (PP), the collection of favourite Finno-Ugric proverbs *Proverbia septentrionalia*, compiled by **Matti Kuusi** and his Finnish-Estonian assistants (PS), and also the collection of favourite European proverbs *European Proverbs*, by **Gyula Paczolay** (EP).

In the late 1950s Matti Kuusi started to collect information about internationally known proverbs into his famous ‘pink card-index’. His initiative expanded into systematic preparing of ‘the Aarne-Thompson of Proverbs’, which 10 years later led to the question of the register’s taxonomy. **Grigori Permiakov’s** attempts of classification were extremely topical in the paremiology of that time, and in the early 1970s (in 1970 and 1972) Kuusi published some extracts from his system for tracing the general outlines of its structure. His 1972 publication (possibly influenced by Permiakov) was based on the extremely productive binary oppositions ‘one : two’, ‘one : all’ and ‘part : whole’, and clearly displayed the existence of typological continuity of some parts of the repertoire. The final version of the system (KL) is continually organised according to the hierarchical-semantic principles, but the choice of applied categories indicates endeavours to achieve a more homogeneous distribution and avoid the occurrence of chain reactions, which might bring about typological ‘tangles’ (similar tricks have been made at the typification of Estonian proverbs in EV publication). Irrespective of this, Kazys Grigas (1996) seems to continually and steadfastly rely on the theoretical and practical effectiveness of categorisation by types.

No-one has ever tried to investigate how such typological ‘chunks’ come into being. We should be certain of one thing, though: the majority of typological links are in fact extremely dense groups of synonyms, formed in pragmatically significant thematic and conceptual areas. The part of typologically continuative material becomes predictably large (and raises a critical problem) especially in vast international corpuses of material, as the ‘volume of semantic reservoir’ of proverbs is assumably finite and the more material has been squeezed into it, the more ‘dense’ the material becomes.

2. SOME GENERAL REMARKS ON “ANIMAL PROVERBS”

About fifteen years ago I entertained the hope to write a doctor's thesis in Russian on metaphors in proverbs, and I searched for material which would be sufficiently large, but not too extensive, and in well-balanced semantical and geographical proportions at the same time (for example, the proportions of *dog*-metaphor in the international proverb material would have proved too “long and thin”, all metaphors in the whole Estonian material too “fat and short”). Thus I decided to concentrate on ‘animal proverbs’: to choose a fair amount of texts containing words denoting animal referents (zoological creatures): fish, birds, insects, etc, but also the names of animal families and genera, like *animal*, *predator*, *bird*, *snake*, etc. I set about gathering material, and by the time I became disillusioned (for several reasons) my file contained nearly 40,000 texts from printed and other sources from about 60 different nations and ethnoses, including those in proverb and proverbial phrase form. Originally I registered the occurrence of animals in both metaphorical and non-metaphorical uses.

The material, however, is incomplete: so far it does not contain a single text from the Romanic peoples, nor from Scandinavia, etc. Instead, it includes a considerable amount of material from the Orient (mostly in the form of Russian translations).

The number of publications on animal proverbs and zoo-metaphors in proverbs is undeservedly small, considering that the semantic field of animals must be the most productive one in proverbial metaphors. Researchers have mostly touched upon animals either observing the relations between proverbs and fables or while discussing references to agriculture and veterinary in proverbs (most typical to German authors). One of the exceptionally few special publications of animal proverbs is *Howl like a Wolf. Animal Proverbs* by **Wolfgang Mieder** (Shelburne 1993).

The pet question of different authors has always been **the frequency of animals** in proverbs: various statistics and ranking lists on that subject have been published, but they tend to cover the material of only one certain ethnic group, and the selections of material have been rather small (see, e.g., Rooth 1968; Negreanu 1979; Ogishima 1992).

My data does not aim to point out certain ‘well-tempered’ universal proportions either, but due to its multi-nationality and considerably larger total size, it is probably capable of illustrating the relative frequencies of animals in proverbs on somewhat higher degree of reliability. True, it also suggests that the proportions vary from region to region considerably.

Irrespective of regional differences we might distinguish the ‘top-three’ group of equally favourite animals 1–3) dog, horse, neat (cow/ox) – i.e. the earliest domesticated animal and two major domestic animals;

they are followed by 4) hen/rooster; 5) wolf; 6) swine; 7) cat; 8) sheep/ram ~ wether – these 8 most favourite animals are featured in nearly half of all the occurrences of zoological terms.

These are followed by 9) fish (as a general term); 10) donkey and mule (primarily in Oriental texts); 11) bird (as a general term); 12) goat; 13) mouse – these 13 most frequently occurring animals make up nearly 2/3 of all the occurrences of animal names in proverbs.

The following 7 animals are 14) crow; 15) snake (as a general term; although in some languages it was not always easy to distinguish between ‘snake’ and ‘worm’); 16) bear; 17) fox; 18) camel (also, primarily in material of eastern cultures); 19) hare; 20) animal (and its synonyms as a general term); – and these 20 most frequently occurring animals make up about 3/4 of all the occurrences of animal terms in proverbs.

The following 5 would be 21) frogs and toads; 22) fly; 23) lion (primarily in the material of Oriental and African countries); 24) goose; 25) eagle – and the 25 highest ranking animal terms make up about 4/5 of the usage of zoological terms. 43 most frequent animal names make up about 90% of all animal term usage, and the remaining approximately 250 terms of the ‘level of species’ (in my material) only 10% of usage (cf. also Krikmann 1997: 193).

Two significant facts stand out in the above statistics:

1) the distribution of vocabulary into word usage is extremely uneven and ‘Zipfian’: the number of the most frequently occurring

words is small, the number of words of medium occurrence is larger, and the number of rarely occurring words is large;

2) the domination of domestic animals is extremely strong in proverbs (even in the material of hunting peoples, such as the Yakuts, for example).

Another main issue is the problem of “**repertoire structure**”, or semantic analysis of sayings containing animal terms. My briefly outlined (see below) attempt of categorisation is clearly ‘animal-centred’. Beside the subject itself, it proceeds from certain additional facts:

1) a relatively abundant body of proverbial expressions, alongside the proverbs proper, which excluded e.g. the categorisation based on universal statements (evaluations, prescriptions), but still enabled to categorise the material according to the scenes, situations, ‘schemes’ or ‘scripts’ displayed in the texts, elementary pragmatic relations, etc.;

2) it seemed reasonable to preserve correlation between the basic categories of the repertoire itself and the trope structure (metaphor structure, primarily) of texts which belong to these categories;

3) like any natural matter, the body of animal expressions is divided according to the prototype principle into ‘lumps’ and ‘thin’, whereas the total amount of ‘lumped’ matter is considerably smaller than the randomly floating ‘thin’ matter (exceptions, hybrid forms, etc.).

The larger and more distinct groups and swarms of material are actually floating in a large amount of random ‘thin’ matter, thus my real concern was to try to find the so-called natural categories on the ‘thick’ side of the matter as flexibly as possible without any hope to describe anything that happens on the ‘thin’ side of the matter.

By the time I gave up my research on ‘zoo-paremic’ material, I had divided it into 4 main categories:

- A. Proverbs concerning animal identity.
- B. Proverbs concerning the relationships between people and animals (usually in metaphorical meaning).

- C. Proverbs concerning the relationships between (metaphorical, as a rule) animals.
- D. Proverbs concerning the relation of animals (either metaphorical or non-metaphorical) towards non-zoological nature and dimensions.

As the current article focuses on category A, I will begin with a brief characterisation of the rest of the categories.

B. PEOPLE / ANIMAL category

Considering the rules outlined in the so-called Great Chain Metaphor by Lakoff and Turner (1989) or elsewhere (e.g. Krikmann 1994), we might assume that the key to understanding these texts lies mostly in ‘translating’, or rendering the animal terms from the biological (instinctive) elementary level to the human level of meaning, i.e. animals function as human beings or less definite ‘human factors’ in these proverbs. Also, this category contains a number of texts with parallel structure, consisting of two contrasting components, metaphorical and literal, e.g. *Satisfy a dog with a bone and a woman with a lie; Give to a pig when it grunts and a child when it cries, and you will have a fine pig and a bad child*. On rare occasions animal terms may literally denote animals.

The category contains several distinct subcategories and clusters.

One of them involves courage/cowardice in relating to animals, trusting animals, etc.: such proverbs teach us why should we be careful with some animals; emphasise that we should not be scared of a dead lion, or a drawn tiger, etc.; inform that those that bark, do not always bite, and vice versa; warn against disturbing a sleeping lion, or to touch the nests and lairs of animals; often they advise us to avoid contact with animals, as pairing up with a dung-beetle you might end up in dung, lying down with a dog you might get fleas, you will learn to howl living among the wolves, etc.

Another subcategory concerns affection towards animals, marriage and family relations with animals, giving birth to animals (a Finnish proverb says: *Marry a pig and you’ll get piglets for good measure; Marrying a bad wife is the same than marrying a snake*, goes a proverb from the East; yet sometimes people marry even animals, for example if they happen to be wealthy).

In proverbs animals are often depicted as troublemakers, thieves and robbers; a separate subject is protecting domestic animals from predators. Proverbs are somewhat differently disposed towards the gratitude/ingratitude of animals: an animal might return a favour (*Throw the dog a bone, and it will not bark*), or tease you instead (*Help a dog out of water, and it will splash water all over you*). Yet another subcategory is concerned with various hunting and fishing schemes, where animals are depicted as prey (incl. domesticating and training of animals, extermination of parasites, etc.). Animals are also frequent constituents of various schemes of possession and ownership: for instance, the relationship between a master and his animal, buying and selling, stealing and swapping animals, the price and value of animals, the troubles accompanying the possession of animals (*No horse, no problems*). There are also a number of other smaller subcategories and clusters.

C. ANIMAL / ANIMAL category

All the texts under this category are basically the so-called *sentential metaphors*, and in order to understand them we have to ‘translate’ the world of animals into the world of humans.

This category is also divided into several subcategories and topics.

There is, for example, an extremely productive cluster of synonyms emphasising that animals (predators, in particular) do not harm each other, and understand each other: wolves never prey upon wolves, a dog does not step on another dog’s paw, etc. Animal metaphors have also provided numerous possibilities to discuss gender issues: looking for a mate, differences in gender behaviour and roles of males and females, different species’ attempts to copulate, which usually fail, etc. Animal metaphors are often used in expressing figuratively the parent-child relationship: all animals protect and care for their young; even an ugly or weak young is dear to his mother; a meek calf sucks two cows; a mare might give birth to many colts, but dies with a bridle on.

There are a few highly productive patterns, which help us model social relations best.

One of such patterns is ‘individual/herd’: the consistence and structure of a herd; the status of an individual inside the herd, the rela-

tionships between the herd and its leader; a stranger in the herd, who is scorned, bitten and gored; reciprocal relationships between herd members (one scabby sheep infects the whole flock); metaphors of caravan, harness and stable.

Another scheme maps the relationships between the killer and its victim, the eater and the one who is eaten: the most stereotypic oppositions would be wolf/sheep and cat/mouse.

Proverbs and animal fables coincide in motifs which oppose and relate a smart animal and a stupid one, or a strong and weak one: a smart animal deceives a fool one; a weaker animal receives advantage (protection) from a stronger one (a gnat on an ox's horn), weaker animals eat the leftovers of stronger animals; a stronger animal takes the food of a weaker. Proverbs where one animal is envious of another and wishes to be like that animal (bigger, prettier, nobler), with a frog and an ox for an example, bear also similarity to fables.

The pot calls the kettle black-type of proverbs have their zoological modifications, as well: an animal laughs at and criticises another, who is actually smarter, prettier, etc., considering himself better than the other.

The group of proverb materials opposing diligent and idle ~ early and late animals is also large and international, especially the synonym of early/late bird (*The early bird wipes its beak, the late one shakes its wings*).

There is a number of other less productive subcategories: an animal dreams of a catch or food; an animal of dignity never pursues a trivial prey; where there is food, there are claimants (for instance, ravens to a carrion); an overly aggressive animal harms itself; even weak animals are not afraid of, or may attack the strong animal if it is sick, old, captured, or otherwise incapable and vulnerable, etc.

D. ANIMAL ALONE; ANIMAL AND NON-ZOOLOGICAL NATURE, DIMENSIONS

It often remains uncertain whether this category involves animals in metaphorical or literal sense: for instance, could the Russian *Волка ноги кормят* (A wolf is fed by its feet) sometimes literally

refer to wolf or not? In many cases we might assume that both are possible, i.e. the animal would serve as a double illustration of the general rule.

One of the main clusters of class D is where an animal is described as a physical, biological, somatic construction. This cluster describes the body parts of animals, their functions and purpose, other physical-biological characteristics and parameters of animals (sounds, motion, size and weight, food, faeces), their outward appearance, physical beauty, emotional moods, etc.: e.g. a whining pig; a cat always lands on its paws; fish begins to stink at the head; even the roach has a heart (i.e. can get angry); and many others. The cluster also displays some distinctive sub-clusters: the pattern 'small, but smart ~ pretty ~ efficient' (small mouse, sharp teeth; a small worm gnaws even through the largest things); animals are never weary or tired of carrying their own body parts (the bird of its feathers, the ox of its horns, the elephant of its tusks); the animal admires its own tail, voice, etc.; a satiated animal does not like its food (the mouse finds flour bitter).

Another larger subcategory associates animals with seasons, times of day and weather: describing animals' food supply at different times of year (it is scarce in winter, for example), animals with diurnal or nocturnal habits, the relations of animals to rainfall, wind, temperature, daylight and darkness (the crane dies while the bog is melting; eat fodder, cow, and remember past summer; one swallow does not make a summer; no wolf is afraid of rain or fog).

The third subcategory contains proverbs concerning animals' relations to space, location as a habitat: there is no place without animals (no lake without fish, no forest without birds); each place has its own animals; each animal or bird likes its own nest best, and does not foul it; an animal feels well in its natural environment (no fish can live on a dry land; water is fine for a seal).

And now we will link the hitherto seemingly incoherent discussions about type thickets and animal proverbs into an assertion: nowhere have I encountered a typological maze so large and continuative as the "identity category" (category A) of animal proverbs and proverbial expressions.

3. PROVERBS OF ANIMAL IDENTITY

The international proverb index by Kuusi and Lauhakangas (KL) has categorised most of the proverb material concerning animal identity (or that of other beings or things) under the following categories:

C1a. X's basic nature, character will be unchanged; characteristics won't be changed;

C1b. X is always X, although...;

C1c. no need to teach X belonging to its character; hopeless to teach things not belonging to X's character;

C1d. X will retain X's habits and customs.

Note that all following original quotations appear in *Italics*, those in Estonian, Finnish, Karelian and Russian followed by translations into English in square brackets. Texts in English and German are not followed by translation. Many examples, primarily from Eastern languages, have been translated from Estonian translations of Russian versions; these examples may not always be completely accurate. English translations as well as more general paraphrasations covering several versions of a text, a whole type or semantic group, are in normal type.

SUBCATEGORY 1: The animal retains its specific identity ~ it will not turn ~ cannot be turned into another animal

I will name the smaller groups and sequences of this subcategory:

Quasi-tautologies: 'Animal X is X ~ remains an X'

Koer jääb ikka koeraks [A dog always remains a dog] (Estonian: EV 4050); *Hund bleibt Hund* (German: W II 846 (672)); also Hungarian: Nagy e95

Siga jääb ikka seaks [A pig always remains a pig] (Estonian, Häädemeeste parish: EV Ø); analogous proverbs Latvian (FS 840, 100), Armenian (Karap. [2] 26, Karap. [3] 103, Shag. 424); Krio (Diachk. 278)

A cat is always a cat (a monkey is always a monkey) (Vietnamese: Br. 167, IGV 67)

Vieh bleibt Vieh (German: B 637)

A deer is always a deer (Ossetian: Ab. 92)

Jänöi on ainos jänöi [A hare is always a hare] (Karelian: KSp 119)

All representatives of species X are identical, similar, alike, there is no significant difference between them

A beast is like a beast, a human like a human (Kara-Kalpakian: Br. 257)

A dog is like a dog (Latvian: FS 1478, 998)

Ei kahdella konnalla ole väliä [There is no difference between two frogs] (Finnish: Sl 100)

Kyllä monta vuohta yhdennäköistä on [Many goats come in the same shape] (Finnish: VKS 242)

All monkeys have similar ugly faces (Tamil/Draavidian: VA 47)

Animal X behaves like animal X ~ persists in its behaviour ~ its nature ~ its character will not change

A dog has dog's tricks: *Koeral koera tembud* (Estonian: EV 4069); *Koiralla on koiran kujeet* (Finnish: Sl 140); analogous proverbs: Karelian (KSp 179), Latvian (FS 828, 8050); *Kus koer kombe jätt vôi halb peni ameti* [Has a dog ever given up its tricks, or a bad canine its trade] (Estonian: EV 4136); A dog never gives up its tricks (Turkmen: Karr. 146); A dog behaves like a dog (Kirghiz: Br. 275)

A wolf has a wolf's nature ~ trade (Latvian: FS 1225, 1585; FS 527, 32002); *Suvella on suven luonto: liha syö, nahan repii* [A wolf has wolf's ways: eats the flesh, tears the skins] (Finnish: Sl 425); *У волка и повадка на волчью стать* [A wolf has wolf's wiles] (Russian: Rybn. 158); A wolf never gives up its tricks (Ossetian: Ab. 17)

A hog has hog's habits (Latvian: FS 1252, 69); A pig will always behave like a pig (Armenian: Karap. [1] 21)

A cat has cat's tricks (Latvian: FS 1444, 1545).

The retained species' characteristics are sometimes described in greater detail (somatic features, characteristic noise, motion, etc.).

Animal retains the somatic features of its species (incl. fur, colour) ~ these cannot be eliminated ~ changed

We have, for example, a highly productive subcategory of internationally known proverbs about leopard ~ panther ~ zebra, who never changes its spots ~ stripes (Bible: Jer. 13:23; in my material: British (T L206), Assyrian (Br. 102), Kurdish (Br. 335), Japanese (Fount. 360) texts; KL C1a 32, incl. abundant material from Africa)

Dog's fur will never change (Komi: Ples. 191)

Punaiissa punainen lehmä kuulooki [A brown cow dies brown] (Finnish: Sl 349)

Magpie's plumage is always ~ everywhere black-and-white ~ it can't be changed (Udmurtian: Kral. 133 and 134, Per. 76)

Varõs õks üt'svalgõ, kaarna ütekarvaline [A crow is always white, a raven of the same colour] (Estonian, district Setu: EV Ø)

A dog's tail is always twisted (Udmurtian: Kral. 189, Per. 61 and 66); A dog never changes the shape of its tail (Turkish: Br. 544); A dog's tail will never be straight (even if it was straightened between chumps of wood ~ in a tube ~... (for seven years) (wide distribution in the Caucasus and Oriental countries, e.g. Georgian: Br. 293; Armenian: Kar. [1] 21, Kar. [2] 26, Kar. [3] 159; Ossetian: Ab. 112; Kurdish: Cel. 112; Pushtu: LJ 35; Arabian: Br. 69, Sharb. 47; Tamil: VA 46; Bengali: Br. 140; Malayan, Indonesian: Br. 364, Kol. 12; KL C1a 19)

A hare has a short tail (Udmurtian: Kral. 188)

Lind ei heida oma sulge kunagi ära [A bird never loses its feathers] (Estonian: EV 5917)

Animal X retains its characteristic way of moving, motor responses, etc.

A magpie ~ A crow never stops hopping ~ A sparrow hops around even when it's 100 years old (German: B 129, 281, 345; Japanese: Petr. 67, Br. 619, Fount. 640)

Die Sau lässt das Wühlen nicht (German: B 345, 487, 686); cf. also: He is like a hog, cannot help but root the ground (Mordvin: Sam. 257)

Animal X retains its characteristic way of making sounds ~ has to make sounds ~ cannot be without making sounds ~ ...

Kuer on loodud haukuma [A dog is born to bark] (Estonian: EV 4123); *Sehän koiran virka on että haukkuu* [Barking is dog's job] (Finnish: Sl 143; cf. also Hungarian: Nagy k2210); A dog has a habit of barking (Latvian: FS 231, 10151); A dog cannot live without barking (Udmurtian: Kral. 189, Per. 161; cf. also Komi: Ples. 194); *Der Hund lässt das Bellen nicht* (German: B 71, 278, 345; also Hungarian: Nagy k2252); A dog barks since it was born (Korean: TKKCh 48); The mouth speaks while it's alive, the dog barks while it's alive (Somalian: Kap. 76)

There is no such thing as not-braying donkeys (Arabian: Sharb. 55; Aserbaidzhan: Gus. 113; Turkmen: Karr. 145)

All representatives of species X make similar sounds ~ Animal X always and everywhere makes the same sounds

All dogs bark the same (Turkmen: Br. 568, Karr. 147)

A rooster always crows the same (Tajik, Uzbek: Br. 457 and 582, Kal. [2] 333, Abdur. 168)

A cuckoo calls the same everywhere (Malagasy: Korn. 86)

All jackals cry the same (Bengali: Br. 120)

All synonyms of notion X have the same meaning ~ all subcategories of species X are identical

Kass koska, koer sabak [The cat is koska, the dog is sabak (*koska* means 'cat' and *sobak* means 'dog' in corrupt Russian)] (Estonian, Karuse parish: EV Ø)

A dog and a canine – both the same Tatars (Hungarian: Nagy e27)

Hund ist Hund, Pudel oder Spitz (German: W II 847 (691))

Apina da oblesjan on yhtenjytys [Apina and oblesjan are the same (*apina* – Finnish for 'monkey'; *oblesjan* – corrupt Russian word for 'monkey')] (Karelian: KSp 17)

Bär und Petz ist eine Hetz (German: B 61and 441)

Goose and gander and gosling are three sounds but one thing (British: T G351)

God-snake is no better than *abeso*-snake (Somalian: Kap. 38)

Subsequently, such proverbs may point out the individual features of animals of the same species, although not changing the general nature of the species.

X is X, be it a large or a small individual

Even a small viper is a snake, even a weak enemy is an enemy
~ A viper is always a viper, no matter how large, an enemy is always an enemy, no matter how far it is, etc. (Mongol: Br. 398, DR 84; Chinese: Tishk. [1] 11, Tishk. [2] 7)

A calf of any size will still be a calf (Korean: TTKCh 57)

No matter how fat an ass gets – it will still be an ass (Ossetian: Ab. 89)

X is X, be it of any colour

Black dog or white dog – a dog is a dog, etc. (of wide distribution, particularly in the Oriental countries, for example: German: W I 847 (691); Russian: D 854, Rybn. 147; Ossetian: Ab. 48; Dargin: Br. 207; Turkish: Br. 521; Tajik, Uzbek: Kal. [2] 294, Br. 571, Abdur. 133; Turkmen: Karr. 114; Kirghiz: Shamb. 27; Uyghur: SK 600); Black dog, piebald cur – both are devils (Hungarian: Nagy k2037); cf. also KL C1b 13

Olgu pōrsas valge vōi kirju, pōrsaks jääb ta ikki [Be a piglet white or piebald, it will still be a piglet] (Estonian, Häädemeeste parish: EV Ø); A flecked pig or a brown pig, still a pig (Kumyk: Naz. 105); Does it matter, whether a pig is black or white (Turkmen: Br. 561, Karr. 111)

Black snake or white snake, it still is a snake (Udmurtian: Kral. 175; Tatar: Br. 481); Cursed be both the black and the white snake (Armenian: Karap. [2] 36, Karap. [3] 215; Aserbaidzhan: Gus. 54)

Нет, не гнед мерин, а саврас мерин, а всё тот же мерин [No, a gelding is not bay but light bay, but a gelding is still a gelding] (Russian: D 854, cf. also 209, 241, 265)

Сера овца, белая овца – всё один овечий дух [Grey sheep, white sheep – both smell like sheep] (Russian: D 853)

X is X, be it a young or an old individual

Yksi on vanhu, toinen sälgy, mielty yhtenverdu [One is an old horse, the other is a foal, both have the same wits] (Karelian: KSp 600)

Бык да теля – одна родня [Ox or a calf – both from the same family] (Russian: D 853)

Young rooster or old, what's the difference (Aserbaidzhan: Gus. 78)

Wolf cub is wolf, too (Uyghur: SK 970)

X is X, be it a male or a female individual

This group consists dominantly of proverbs from the Oriental countries, and the animals occurring here tend to be good or 'noble'.

(In forest) a lion is a lion, be it male or female (Kurdish: Br. 334, Cel. 261 and 365; Persian: Krgl. 239; Aserbaidzhan: Br. 38, Gus. 12); Don't grieve over the birth of a daughter – a lioness is as good as a lion, etc. (Uzbek: Abdur. 166; Turkmen: Karr. 70)

Male or female eagle, an eagle is an eagle (Armenian: Karap. [1] 37, Karap. [2] 40, Karap. [3] 40)

Cf. also Russian: *Нет, не собака, а сука* (D 265), *Нет не кобель, а кобелиха* (D 265) [No, not a dog, but a bitch]

Further, 'X is X' -structures might occur alternately with 'X is not Y' -structures.

X is not Y ~ X can never be Y (or one subcategory of X will never be another)

In this group animals are set in oppositions on the basis of their size, dangerousness, 'nobility', etc.

A wolf is not a sheep (Latvian: FS 1552, 1956); *Aus einem Wolf wird kein Lamm* (German: B 340, 681)

Aus einem Tiger wird nie ein Lamm (German: B 427)

A wolf will never be a sheepdog (Livonian: LV 878); *Eihän metsäkoirasta ole kartanokoiraks* [A wild dog will not become a farm dog] (Finnish: Sl 234); A sheepdog will never become a bird-

dog (Latvian: FS 609, 5253); *Aus einem Mops wird kein Jagdhund* (German: B 402)

If it's a cat, it will never turn into a dog (Chinese: Br. 306); An evil dog will never turn into a good cat (Indonesian: Kol. 11)

A kindly aver will never make a good horse (British: T A403); *A good horse becomes never a jade* (T H645)

A donkey will not become a horse (Turkish: Ivan. 26; Tatar: Br. 499); A horse can never become a donkey (Hindi: Br. 599)

A snake hatchling will never become a chicken (Armenian: Karap. [2] 26, Karap. [3] 214)

Quite often birds are presented in a couple – a predator and a harmless bird, a songbird and a voiceless bird, a 'noble' and a 'vulgar' bird:

A crow ~ A sparrow ~ An owl ~ A goose ~ A pidgeon will never become an eagle ~ hawk (Latvian: FS 1263, 577; German: B 144, 188, 241, 328; Russian: D 724, Ruk. 84; Kirghiz: Br. 270, Shamb. 346)

A crow ~ a sparrow will never be a nightingale (Estonian: EV 5957; German: B 328 and 413; Turkish: Ivan. 6)

Sometimes the pairs are randomly selected:

Ei tule variksesta vesilintua [A crow will never become a waterbird] (Finnish: Sl 523); *Tyhjäs tottu ei rodie, metsoi tetrez menöy* [Truth will not arise from an empty place, a wood grouse will not turn into a black grouse] (Karelian: KSp 533); A sparrow will never become a nightingale, a duck will never get its wings wet (Uzbek: Br. 572)

Other random pairs:

A foal is not a chicken (Latvian: FS 997, 2816); *Was ein Schwein ist, wird sein Leben kein Ochse* (German: B 528); A cat can never become a cow (Korean: TKKCh 67); A cat is not a hare (Latvian: FS 529, 1717); *Камень – не угодье, пес – не баран* [A stone is not arable land, a cur is not a ram] (Russian: D 470); A goat is not a dog, own child is not a slave (Ovambo: Kuusi 1424); A turtle can never become an eagle (Uzbek: Abdur. 156)

Further elaboration on the subject might vary in temporal or other aspects.

X remains an X ~ It will never become Y regardless of time or age: young and old, from birth till death, from dawn till dusk, etc.

Kes koer elades, see koer surres [He who lives like a dog, dies as one] (Estonian: EV 4050); *Mis koer õhtul, see koer homikul* [A dog in the evening is the same dog in the morning] (Estonian: EV 4165); Who is a dog until noon, is a dog in the afternoon (Hungarian: Nagy d61)

Once an ass, always an ass (Latvian: FS 796, 4296); Born as an ass, lived like an ass, died an ass (Persian: Krgl. 193); Born as a horse – is a horse, born as an ass – is an ass (Malayan, Indonesian: Br. 371)

Слон родился – слон и есть [Born as an elephant – is an elephant] (Russian: D 572)

A crow lives long, but it will always be a crow (Ossetian: Br. 407, Ab. 30)

Кто волком родился, тому лисой не бывать [Who was born as a wolf, can never become a fox] (Russian: D 724, cf. also D 723, Ruk. 125); *Волком родился, овцой не бывать* [Born as a wolf, will never become a sheep] (Russian: D 723)

Or some pairs of birds from Mordvin proverbs:

Born as an owl – no good as a nightingale (Sam. 315); Born as a hen – will never become a duck (Sam. 210); Born as a hen – can never fly like an eagle (Sam. 209)

Further, a proverb may contain various *though*-clauses.

X is X ~ it will never become an Y, though it resembles Y in outward appearance or colour

A dog is not a hare, even though it had the same reddish colour (Hungarian: Nagy ny268)

A piebald goat will not become a tiger (Tajik: Kal. [2] 136)

A polecat might be piebald, but it will never become a lion (Uzbek: Kal. [2] 136, cf. also Abdur. 122)

A fly might have antlers, but you cannot call it a buffalo (Chinese: Tishk. [1] 52)

A bee might have a striped back, but you cannot call it a tiger (Chinese: Tishk [1] 52, Tishk [2] 42)

X will not become Y, no matter how large it may be (presuming Y is a large animal)

Из большого осла все не выйдет слона [Even a large ass will never become an elephant] (Russian: D 548)

A hog might be large, but it is not an elephant (Bengali: Br. 118)

Though the animal might change its fur ~ its skin, it preserves its specific identity

A remarkably productive and widely known group of proverbs.

A wolf may change its fur, but never its manners ~ heart ~ teeth (Estonian: EV 1618; Livonian: LV 862; Latvian: FS 1652, 2352; German: B 40 and 681; British: T W616, W613; Russian: D 723; Mari: Ib. 109; Mordvin: Sam. 241; Komi: Ples. 192; Armenian: Br. 72, Karap [1] 21, Karap. [2] 24, Karap. [3] 48; Turkish: Leb. 40; Aserbaidzhan: Gus. 104)

Der Fuchs ändert's Haar und bleibt, was er war (German: B 87, 181); *A fox may change his heyre but not his minde* (British: T W616)

A dog may change its fur but not its manners (Estonian: EV 1618; Livonian: LV 621; Latvian: FS 1341, 6845; Turkish: Ivan. 36)

A snake may change its skin, but not its mind ~ manners (Armenian: Karap. [3] 216, Shag. 347; Persian: Br. 21, Krgl. 273; Aserbaidzhan: Br. 37; Tajik: Kal. [1] 239; Turkmen: Karr. 119); A snake might leave its skin, but its heart remains the same (Russian: Rybn. 107; Georgian: Br. 192); *Die Schlange wechselt wohl die Haut, aber nicht die Giftzähne* (German: B 219, 503; cf. also Latvian: FS 1600, 5608); *Скинула кожу змея, а яд при ней остался* [A snake left its skin, but not its poison] (Russian: Rybn. 76)

Cf. also PS 618; EP 32; KL C1a 33

You cannot turn ~ grow X into Y

You cannot turn a bear into a wolf (Udmurtian: Per. 65); You cannot turn a wolf into a bear (Udmurtian: Kral. 190)

You cannot turn a sheep into a wolf (Udmurtian: Per. 68); You cannot turn a wolf into a sheep (Udmurtian: Kral. 125); You cannot grow a wolf into a lamb (Komi: Ples. 36)

Hundist ei saa karjakoera [A wolf would not become sheepdog] (Estonian: EV 1611; cf. also Latvian: FS 1393, 2661)

You cannot make a tiger out of a sheep (Indonesian: Kol. 31)

You cannot make a sheep out of a goat (Udmurtian: Kral. 190); You cannot turn a sheep into a goat (Udmurtian: Per. 68)

You cannot make a nightingale out of a crow (Latvian: FS 1940, 2563)

X will never become Y (or subspecies X_m will never become X_n), no matter how hard it would work ~ try

All the examples under this group happen to be Russian proverbs:

Не дуйся, коровка, не быть бычком [Take it easy, cow, you will never be an ox] (D 548)

Как ни бодришь ворона, а до сокола далеко [No matter how hard you try, crow, it will be a long way] (D 724)

Синица хоть тресни – журавлем не быть [A titmouse may try until it bursts, but will never become a crane] (Ruk. 110, cf. also Ruk. 62, D 847)

Сколько утка ни бодришь, а лебедем ~ гусем не быть [A duck may try as hard as it can, but it will never become a swan ~ goose] (D 830, Rybn. 67)

X will never become Y, no matter how fast it would run ~ how high it would fly ~ how clever it would be, etc.

No matter how fast a watchdog would run, it will never become a hound (Uzbek: Abdur.122)

Even the fastest ass is not a horse (Uyghur: SK 1110); No matter how hard would a crow try, it will never become an eagle;

how fast would an ass run, it will never become a trotter (Kirghiz: Shamb. 195)

No matter how high would a raven ~ sparrow ~ owl fly, it will never become an eagle ~ hawk (Russian: D 830; Mordvin: Sam. 210; Tamil: VA 48)

No matter how strong the raven's grip, it will never become a hawk (Uyghur: SK 1111); A ferret has stripes, but it will never become a tiger; a crow is slick, but it will never become a hawk (Uzbek: Abdur. 122)

X will always be X ~ it will never become Y, wherever it goes ~ An X at one place, an X at another

Kes koer siin, see koer seal [Who is a dog here, is a dog there] (Estonian: EV 4104); *Kes koir kotun, see koir vällän* [Who is a dog at home, is a dog outside] (Estonian: EV 4054); A dog might go abroad, but it still is a dog (Malayan: Br. 379); A dog is just a dog, even if it swims across the Danube (Hungarian: Nagy d416)

Wo ein Esel eingeht, kommt auch ein Esel aus (German: B 140, 261, cf. also 139, 172)

A snake is a snake even under the ground (Indonesian: Kol. 13)

Wherever a crow would fly, it will never turn into ~ be thought of as an eagle (Udmurtian: Per. 76, Kral. 132)

A crow in the pond is the same than a crow on the shore (Latvian: FS 1594, 2998)

Send off a young X, it will return as an old X

Wenn man ein Kalb fortschickt, kommt ein Ochse wieder (German: B 166, 299, 673); *Поехал теленок, а повернулся быком* [A calf went off, an ox returned] (Russian: Ruk. 60, cf. also Ruk. 106, D 440)

Vie porsas Saksaan, tuo sikana takaisin [Take a piglet to Germany, bring a pig back] (Finnish: VKS 411); *Vie porsaana kylään, sikana takasi tuloo* [Take a piglet to the village, a pig will return] (Karelian: KSp 398)

X remains X ~ will not become something better ~ X will never become Y, even if it stayed at holy ~ sublime ~ faroff places ~ famous schools ~ important centres

Matti Kuusi has analysed this group of proverbs in his article (1994/1998).

If (Christ's) ass stays at Mecca (and Medina), it'll still come back an ass (widely known in the eastern cultures, e.g. Persian: Br. 420; Pushtu: Br. 439; Tajik: Br. 457, Kal. [1] 308, Kal. [2] 322; Uyghur: SK 751); An ass may go to Mecca, but it will not become pure (Uzbek: Kal. [2] 322, Abdur. 179); An ass went to Jerusalem 40 times and was still the same ass (Armenian: Br. 88, Karap. [1] 21, Karap. [2] 26, Karap. [3] 77, Shag. 232); *Осел и в Киеве ~ Цареграде конем не будет* [An ass will not become a horse even in Kiev ~ in Tsaritsyn] (Russian: Ruk. 59 and 104); An ass entered a pharmacy and an ass came out (Arabian: Br. 54); I sent my ass travelling, but it returned the same ass (Kurdish: Br. 336)

Vie sika Saksaan, tuo sika Saksasta – sika sika kumminkin on [Take a pig to Germany, bring the pig back from Germany – it will still be the same pig] (Finnish: VKS 410, cf. also Sl 404, Spk 21); *Saada siga Saksamaale, pese siga seebiga, siga tuleb koju, siga jääb seaks* [Take a pig to Germany, wash it with soap, the pig comes back home, and a pig is still a pig] (Estonian: EV 10363; cf. PS 758; KL C1c 19)

Vii koer kiriku ehk too tagasi, ühesugu karvane ikka [Take a dog to the church and bring it back; it will still be the same hairy dog] (Estonian: EV 4184); *Wie der Hund in die Kirche kommt, so geht er wieder hinaus* (German: W II 875 (1299), cf. also W II 835 (391)); Can a black dog turn into a holy cow after a pilgrimage to Benares (Telugu: Br. 509)

The wolf goes to Rome and there leaves his hairs and not his manners (British: T W613)

Who goes a beast to Rome a beast returns (British: T B156)

Bär bleibt Bär, fährt man ihn auch übers Meer (German: B 61)

Eine Gans übers Meer, eine Gans wieder her (German: B 188, 392); *Полетели за море гуси, прилетели тож не лебеди* [Geese flew overseas, but did not return as swans] (Russian: D 327);

Ворона за море летала, да вороной и вернулась [A crow flew overseas and returned as a crow] (Russian: D 440); *Ворона за море летала, да лучше не стала* [A crow flew overseas, but did not become any better] (Russian: Rybn. 66)

The animal retains its specific qualities (its characteristic call, for example), even after having visited faraway ~ holy places, etc.

Send a calf to Paris – it will return home and say ‘moo’ (Frisian: W II 1103 (86))

A cat may visit Mecca, but it will not stop meowing (Indonesian: Kol. 9)

Журавли за море летают, а всё одно курлы [Cranes flew overseas, but still shrieked the same] (Russian: D 440)

The animal remains itself ~ holds on to its habits or expectations, even after having entered a monastic order

Постригся кот, посхимился кот, а всё тот же кот [The cat tonsured its head, the cat entered the higher monastic order, but the cat is still a cat] (Russian: D 658); *Кот Евстафий постригся, посхимился, а всё мышей во сне видит* [The cat tonsured its head, entered the monastic order, but still dreams of mice in its sleep] (Russian: Rybn. 153)

Cf. also Georgian: A fox cropped itself to a monk (Br. 196)

The animal will not become a pilgrim or a monk, though it has been to Mecca for 40 times

An ass who has been on a pilgrimage will not become a pilgrim (Kurdish: Cel. 336)

A camel might travel to Mecca (for 40 times), but it will not become a hajji (Turkish: Leb. 43; Aserbaidzhan: Gus. 97; Turkmen: Karr. 59)

A mouse converted to Islam, but the number of Muslims didn’t grow (and the number of Chistians didn’t fall) (Arabian: Br. 62, Sharb. 53)

X animal will always be X ~ it will never become Y, though it has lived among Ys

Let a cow into a herd of horses, but it still won't become a horse (Udmurtian: Per. 67)

A dog will always be a dog, even if it has grown up among lions (Arabian: Sharb. 58); A lion will always be a lion, even if its claws have become weak, a dog will always be a dog, even if it has grown up among lions (Arabian: Br. 61)

Exception: A wolf cub will always be a wolf, even if it has grown up among people (Assyrian: Br. 94; Persian: Br. 418, Krgl. 525)

X will never learn to sound like Ys, though it has lived among Ys

A nightingale might grow up in the crow's nest, but it will never learn to croak (Bengali: Br. 140)

X remains X ~ it will never become Y, though its outward appearance is changed (tail or ears cut off, tail attached, etc.)

A dog will be a dog, even if you cut its tail off (Estonian, Rakvere parish: EV Ø; Latvian: FS 542, 897; German: W II 826 (168); British: T D520); You can cut the dogs tail as short as you like, but it will not become a hound (Kurdish: Cel. 276); Chop off the dog's tail – it will still not turn into a sheep ~ lamb (Russian: D 722; Mari: Ib. 45; Udmurtian: Kral. 75, Per. 67; Armenian: Br. 75, Shag. 361)

Cut an ass's ears – it will still not become an (Arabian) horse (Turkish: Br. 539, Leb. 42); You can cut an ass's ears, but it will still not become a gazelle (Turkish: Ivan. 28)

You can cut off a pig's tail and ears, but it will still be a pig (Turkish: Leb. 20); You can cut off a pig's snout and ears, but it will still be called a pig (Aserbaidzhan: Gus. 65)

You can put a dog's tail on a goat, but it will not become a dog (Udmurtian: Per. 65)

X will not become Y, no matter what sounds it makes ~ though it sounds like animal Y

No matter how much a goat would shriek, it will not become a cow (Mordvin: Sam. 209)

No matter how much a crow would croak – it will not become a nightingale (Kalmyk: Br. 241)

A crow may fly and cackle but it will not become a goose (Kirghiz: Shamb. 175)

Cf. also KL C1a 31

Animal X remains X ~ sounds the same ~ it will not become Y, though it is stroked ~ it is sheared ~ combed / or: no matter how much it is beaten (often occurs as alternatives and contaminations of texts of the next group)

A beaten pig is the same as a pig who is not beaten (Latvian: FS 1151, 330); *Sui sika, pese sika, sika sika sentään on* [Comb a pig, wash a pig, a pig is still a pig] (Finnish: VKS 411, cf. also Sl 403); *Silitä taikka pese sika, yhdellä tavalla se vinkuu* [Stroke or wash a pig, it will whine the same] (Finnish: VKS 411); *Lyö sika, pese porsasta, yhdellä lailla ne vinkuvat* [Beat the pig, wash the piglet, both whine the same way] (Finnish: VKS 411); *Siguja syötä libo lyö, yhtä hyvin rögäjäh* [Feed the pigs or beat them, they whine the same] (Karelian: KSp 459, cf. also 458); *Pottšii sivo libo keritä, yksikai vinguu* [Hit the pig or shear it, still whines the same] (Karelian: KSp 400, cf. also 457)

A whisked dog is the same than a dog not whisked (Latvian: FS 1551, 2870)

Strip the wolf of seven skins, it will still be a wolf (Georgian: Br. 205)

Scratch an ass as much as you like – it will not become a horse ~ trotter (Armenian: Karap. [2] 33, Karap. [3] 75); No matter how much you beat an ass – it will not become a horse ~ trotter (Armenian: Shag. 350; Persian: Br. 430; Pushtu: LJ 28, Br. 439); cf. also Bengali: Tries to beat a horse out an ass (Br. 136); Beat an ass as much as you like – it will not become a mule (Armenian: Karap. [1] 21, Karap. [2] 26, Karap. [3] 75, Shag. 415)

An animal will not turn into another, even after washing or bathing (in holy water)

No matter how much a crow would bathe, it will never become a goose (Armenian: Karap. [1] 22, Karap. [2] 26, Karap. [3] 12, Shag. 360); A crow will never become a swan, even if it bathed in the Ganges (Telugu: Br. 512; Tamil: Br. 496, VA 48)

If an ass bathes, will it become a horse (Malayan: Br. 378); No matter how much you wash an ass, it will never become a cow (Nepal: Br. 404)

An animal will not turn into another, no matter how you feed it

Feed a crow whatever you like, it will never become a falcon (Kirghiz: Shamb. 174)

X will be X ~ it will not turn into Y though it has beautiful bridles ~ silky girth ~ golden saddle ~ (Y's) saddle on

A stereotype opposition in the eastern proverbs is again formed of an ass and a horse:

Put a nice harness on an ass – it will not become a horse (Bengali: Br. 132); Put a golden bridle on an ass – it will still be an ass (Turkish: Ivan. 21); An ass is an ass even under silk saddlecloth (Persian: Krgl. 518; cf. also Tajik: Kal. [1] 308, Kal. [2] 322); An ass is an ass even with a golden saddle (Turkish: Leb. 42; cf. also Ossetian: Ab. 35); Put a (horse) saddle on an ass – it will still be an ass ~ will not become a horse, etc. (Tati: Br. 500; Lesgin: Br. 352; Tamil: VA 45); You can saddle a black ass – but it will still not turn into a mule (Aserbaidzhan: Gus. 120)

Cf. also: Same ass, but a new ~ another saddle ~ has changed its saddlecloth ~ ... (Armenian: Br. 82, Karap. [1] 21, Karap. [2] 24, Karap. [3] 77; Kurdish: Cel. 337; Persian: Br. 427, Krgl. 192; Assyrian: Br. 99; Arabian: Sharb. 19; Aserbaidzhan: Gus. 96; Pushtu: LJ 57 and 62; Tajik: Kal. [1] 188, Kal. [2] 321)

Saddle a horse in gold – a horse is still a horse (Aserbaidzhan: Gus. 65)

Pane sea selga kuldsadul, siiski jääb ta seaks [Put a golden saddle on a pig, it is still a pig] (Estonian: EV 10361); *Wenn man die Sau sattelt, wird noch lange kein Reitpferd draus* (German: B 486)

Der Ochs wird kein Reitpferd, wenn er auch einen Sattel bekommt (German: W III 1096 (77))

X will be X though clad in royal clothing ~ adorned ~ a golden ring through its nose ~ a crown on its head, etc.

Hund bleibt Hund, wenn er auch ein roth Halsband trägt (German: W II 846 (647)); A dog will be a dog, though gilded with gold (Arabian: Sharb. 15)

Wenn man den Ochsen auch die Hörner vergoldet, sie bleiben doch Ochsen (German: W III 1105 (292))

A pig will be a pig, even if it had a golden ring through its snout (Livonian: LV 807); *Свинья в золотом ошейнике всё свинья* [A pig in a golden collar is still a pig] (Russian: D 587, cf. also Ruk. 177); A pig is a pig even in silk (Mordvin: Sam. 248)

Adorn an ass as you like – it will still be an ass (Assyrian: Br. 99)

Ahv jääb ikka ahviks, pane või krimpleen selga [An ape will always be an ape, though clad in silk] (Estonian, Urvaste parish: EV Ø); *An ape is an ape, though clad in scarlet ~ gold* (British: T A263, cf. also A262); An ape is an ape even with a crown on its head (Japanese: Petr. 84)

Praise or adulation will not change the animal into another

Praising will not turn an ass into a horse (Turkmen: Br. 563, Karr. 104)

Teaching or training will not change the animal

Train an owl as much as you like, it will not turn into a nightingale (Persian: Krgl. 140)

SUBCATEGORY 2: Son – parent relationship, transmitting of species characteristics from parents to their offspring

The son of X is also X ~ animal X gives birth to the same animals ~ Y will not hatch from X's egg, etc.

Was von der Kuh geboren ist, bleibt ein Rindvieh (German: B 335, 473)

A horse is born from a mare, a hero from a mother (Kara-Kalpak: Br. 250; Kazakh: Br. 223); A horse is born from Argamak, evil is born from evil (Tatar: Br. 488); A mare gives birth to a horse, a female donkey to a donkey foal (Aserbaidzhan: Gus. 42); Humans give birth to humans, asses give birth to asses (Kurdish: Br. 336)

A dog's son is also a dog (Hungarian: Nagy k2304); A canine mother's daughter is also a dog (Nagy e100); Expect puppies from a dog, sables from a sable (Armenian: Karap. [2] 26, Karap. [3] 166, Shag. 483); A piglet is born from a sow, a puppy from a bitch (Udmurtian: Per. 108)

Piglet is the child of a pig (Latvian: FS 1225, 30919); *От бобра – бобренок, от свињи – поросенок* [From a beaver – a beaver kit (is born), from a pig – a piglet] (Russian: D 721); *От лося – лосята, от свињи – поросята* [From an elk – a calf is born, from a pig – a piglet] (Russian: D 721); cf. also Estonian: *Emmisel on kümme poega, kõigest saavad sead, kubjal üksaenus, sellestki saa kubjast* [A sow has ten sons, all will be pigs, an overseer has only one, he will also become an overseer] (EV 660)

A kid will be born from a nanny-goat, a lamb from a sheep (Ossetian: Br. 412, Ab. 91)

Karhull on karhun penikat [A bear has bear cubs] 'cold summer follows a cold winter' (Finnish: Sl 109, cf. also Sl 110)

Suvell on suve penikatkii [A wolf has wolf cubs] (Finnish: Sl 425); (Only) a wolf ~ cub is born to a (female) wolf (Arabian: Br. 64, cf. also Sharb. 39; Pushtu: Br. 439, LJ 14); A wolf's son is also a wolf (Aserbaidzhan: Gus. 42)

Lion's children ~ Those who are born from a lion will be lions (Turkish: Br. 543, Ivan. 30; Uzbek: Br. 574, Abdur. 67); If the father is lion, then the son is a lion cub (Vietnamese: Br. 153)

Kyl kärme kärmeen siittää [A snake will give birth to a snake] (Finnish: Spk 172); Can a snake give birth to anything but a snake (Arabian: Br. 66, cf. also Sharb. 39); A snake gives birth to a snake, a wolf gives birth to a wolf (Udmurtian: Per. 107); A scorpion gives birth to a scorpion, a snake to a snake (Tajik: Kal. [1] 50, Kal. [2] 67; Uzbek: Br. 575, Kal. [2] 67, Abdur. 83)

Dragons give birth to dragons (Chinese: Tishk. [2] 66); A dragon is born from a dragon, a gossip from a gossip (Vietnamese: IGV 32, Br. 168)

Frogs are born from frogs ~ A frog's son is also a frog, etc. (Estonian: EV 4305; Japanese: Petr. 59, Br. 632, Fount. 258)

Saivaren täi paskantaa [Louse shits nit(s)] (Finnish: VKS 339, cf. also Sl 387 and 496)

Once again bird referents form contrasting pairs: noble and vulgar, predator with non-predator, song bird with a bird who does not sing, etc.:

Only young crows hatch from crow's eggs (Georgian: Br. 193); A raven is born to a raven, a crow to a crow (Yakut: Em. 191); Eagle's sons are eagles, raven's sons are ravens ~ crow's sons are crows (Yakut: Em. 45); *Орел орла плодит, а сова сову родит* [An eagle begets an eagle, an owl is born to an owl] (Russian: D 722); Eagle's sons are eagles (Japanese: Petr. 81); *Haukall on haukan pojat* [A hawk has hawks' sons] (Finnish: Sl 35)

A nightingale is born to a nightingale, a cricket to a cricket (Tajik: Kal. [1] 50, Kal. [2] 67)

Дурка дурку и высиживает [A turkey is hatched from a turkey hen] (Russian: D 721)

Phoenixes hatch phoenixes (Chinese: Tishk. [1] 38)

Animal X will not give birth to animal Y ~ The eggs of a certain bird or snake will not hatch another bird or snake

Here the opposition of animals is unavoidable, and is still based on the contrast of noble/vulgar, predator/harmless, pretty/ugly, etc.

Кошке тигра не родить [A cat does not give birth to a tiger] (Russian: Rybn. 96); A tiger does not give birth to a cat (Tamil: VA 47)

An ass does not give birth to a horse foal (Ossetian: Ab. 92); Can an ass give birth to a horse, can an ass run faster than a horse (Uyghur: SK 1427); A horse does not give birth to an ass (Indonesian: Kol. 10)

Ega härjast jänest sünni [An ox does not give birth to a hare] (Estonian: EV 1823)

A dog does not give birth to a lamb (Armenian: Karap. [1] 22, Karap. [2] 26, Karap. [3] 164, Shag. 417); Don't expect lambs from a dog (Georgian: Br. 200)

A wolf does not give birth to lambs ~ Wolf's son is not a lamb (Turkish: Br. 545, Leb. 41)

A nanny goat does not give birth to a lamb (Adyghe: Br. 33)

A pig does not give birth to a lamb (Turkish: Ivan. 26); A kite does not give birth to an eagle, a pig does not give birth to a lamb (Uyghur: SK 1424)

You can't milk a rooster, don't expect a calf from a pig (Komi: Ples. 94)

He родит свинья бобра [A pig does not give birth to a beaver kit] (Russian: Ruk. 58); *От свиньи не родится бобренок, – только поросенок* [Pigs do not give birth to beaver kits – only to piglets] (Russian: Ruk. 36); including plenty of other Russian variants – see for example Ruk. 128 and 185, D 722, Rybn. 96)

Ei siga sobelii saa [A pig does not give birth to a sable] (Karelian: KSp 458, cf. also 400); *Ei koiru kunittšua sua eigo siga sobolii* [A dog does not give birth to a marten, nor a pig to a sable] (KSp 179, cf. also 458)

Свинья не родит сокола [A pig does not give birth to an eagle] (Russian: D 722)

A frog does not give birth to snakes (Indonesian: Kol. 31); *Ega konna pojast kala ei kasva* [A frog's son will not grow into a fish] (Estonian: EV 4302)

An eagle does not hatch an owl (British: T E2; Russian: D 722); A raven does not hatch an eagle (Arabian: Br. 64, Sharb. 40)

Adler brüten keine Tauben (German: B 27, 98, 579); *An eagle does not hatch a dove* (British: T E2)

There are a number of other random contrasting pairs:

A nightingale from a crow (Udmurtian: Kral. 146); a peacock from a crow (Russian: Rybn. 96; Tajik: Kal. [1] 65); chickens from a crow (Karelian: KSp 558); chickens out of cuckoo's eggs (Russian: D 456); swan from a hen (Uyghur: SK 1425); a phoenix from a hen (Chinese: Tishk. [1] 39, Tishk. [2] 67); a raven from a goose (Karelian: KSp 189), and others.

Bird, snake, etc. X does not lay eggs ~ its nest has no ~ it does not hatch the eggs of bird, snake, etc. Y

You can't take a chicken egg from a crow's nest (Chinese: Br. 292)

Ei ole korpin pesäs hanhen munii eigä hanhen pesäs korpin poikii [There are no goose eggs in the raven's nest, nor raven's hatchlings in the goose's nest] (Karelian: KSp 189); *Varekse pesäst ei maksa hanemuna etsida* [There's no point in looking for a goose egg in a crow's nest] (Estonian: EV 13818)

Harakan pesästä ei pie ehtii hanhen munii eikä sian päätä köyhän paasta [There's not point in looking for a goose egg in a magpie's nest nor pig head (meant as a tidbit) in poor man's pot] (Finnish: SI 32)

A hen does not lay goose eggs (Ossetian: Ab. 61)

A hen does not hatch partridge eggs (Armenian: Karap. [2] 26)

Thou shalt know an Eagles nest, disdaines to hatch a Crow (British: T E2)

I don't believe a dragonfly could lay eagle eggs (Georgian: Br. 198)

Ein Schlange legt keine Taubenei (German: B 353, 503)

Cf. also exceptions, where a bird is forced to lay or hatch the eggs of another bird:

Gave chicken eggs to a crow (Vietnamese: IGV 23, cf. also Br. 168); *Hanhen pesäh ei pie tuuva harakan munua* [You should not put magpie's egg to a goose's nest] (Karelian: KSp 49); A wild duck was forced to lay goose eggs (Ossetian: Ab. 33); Don't force a titmouse lay crane eggs (Mari: Ib. 86); Don't lay snake eggs under a hatching dove (Armenian: Shag. 508)

A young animal X ~ egg will grow into an adult animal X ~ it will not grow ~ it cannot be grown into animal Y

Lapsesta mies tulee, penikaste koira kasvaa [A child will become a man, a puppy will grow into a dog] (Finnish: VKS 400, cf. also SI 324)

A foal will become horse (Livonian: LV 1020); A horse's son will become a horse (Hungarian: Nagy 1712); A horse will grow from a foal, a man is a man since childhood (Tuva: HS 37)

An ass foal will grow into an ass (Armenian: Br. 79, Karap. [1] 21, Karap. [2] 26, Karap. [3] 90); A little ass grew up – still the same ass (Kurdish: Cel. 75); You can't straighten a twist in a pole, you can't grow a horse out of an ass (Chechen, Ingush: Br. 607); cf. also Armenian and Turkish: Though an ass grows up, it will not become a stableboy (Br. 87, Karap. [1] 21, Karap. [2] 26; Leb. 62)

Früher ein Kalb, später ein Ochs (German: B 299, 434); Even a calf will become a cow once ~ in time (Udmurtian: Kral. 160; Persian: Br. 421); cf. also Estonian: *Kest lehm kasus, pidi jo väikult vasik olema* [Who grows into a cow must have been a calf once] (EV 5634)

Igast põrsast kasvab siga [Every piglet will grow into a pig] (Estonian, Tartu: EV Ø); *Aus einem Ferkel wird eine Sau* (German: B 154, 487, cf. also 313); No matter how large a piglet would grow, it will never become an elephant (Tamil: VA 46)

Aus Zicklein ~ Kitzlein werden Böcke (German: B 89, 311, 695)

Aus jungen Füchsen werden alte (German: B 181)

(Every) wolf cub grows into a wolf (Turkish: Ivan. 6; Aserbaidzhan: Gus. 43); A wolf cub will not grow into a dog (Turkish: Ivan. 6; Kirghiz: Shamb. 100)

A lion cub will become a lion (Turkmen: Karr. 96); A lion cub will not grow into a jackal (Bengali: Br. 129)

Even a chicken will become a hen once (Udmurtian: Per. 51)

A tadpole will become a frog (Ovambo: Kuusi 63); Was a tadpole, became a frog (Japanese: Petr. 63)

Nits will be lice (British: T N191)

Cf. also: An egg that lies on the ground will once become a bird that flies under the sky (Dargin: Naz. 64; Aserbaidzhan: Gus. 62; Kirghiz: Shamb. 146, 300, Br. 278; Mongolian: DR 61)

Even the young animal has its specific qualities and characteristics

A puppy barks, barks and grows into a dog (Aserbaidzhan: Gus. 49 and 112; Turkmen: Karr. 139)

Isä virka pojalle, sijankärsä porsahalle [Son will have his father's job, piglet will have pig's snout] (Finnish: Sl 82, cf. also Sl 80, Spk 173); *The young pig grunts like the old sow* (British: T P309); *У свињи и поросята рыласты* [A pig will have piglets with snouts, too] (Russian: D 722, cf. also Ruk. 77)

Even a young mouse will become a rodent (Arabian: Sharb. 39)

A lion is scary even at the young age (Udmurtian: Per. 64; Aserbaidzhan: Gus. 13)

Leopard's youngs have spots, too (Somalian: Kap. 68)

An elephant's son is a giant, too (Vietnamese: IGV 59)

Was von Hühnern kommt, kratzt gern (German: B 277); *He that comes of a hen, must scrape* (British: T H420)

4. AND IT GOES ON AND ON AND ON...

Due to the limited space, I abstracted only two subcategories of proverbs of animal identity. In reality this continually shifting pattern goes on and on.

For example, in the following subcategory **the specific or gender identity of the animal changes, or the animal will not pass it on to its young**. Once again, the change is presented through oppositions large/small, predator/harmless, noble/vulgar, pretty/ugly, etc.

An Udmurtian proverb says that a hen could turn into a rooster; the Hungarians think that a jade might become a magic horse; in Japan even a mouse could become a tiger; in China phoenixes can be born in a crow's nest; a Korean proverb says that a father might be a lion, but its son is a jackal (or a Vietnamese proverb, which

says that a tiger has given birth to a puppy, or that a cobra has given birth to a lizard, or that a hen has hatched ducklings); the Ovambos let a fly give birth to a bee; among the Japanese and Uyghurs a kite could hatch an eagle, etc. etc.

The species of an animal (in the metaphorical meaning) can change **under specific circumstances and situations** (at the old age, for example, or when for other reasons incapable, in trouble, in distress, with ill luck, in shame, abroad, etc.): thus an old cat turns into a fox in Vietnam, an old lion into a dog among the Ingush people, in Armenia a cat turns into a lion in trouble, among the Bengali a cat may turn into a tiger in a fight, in several eastern countries a horse in the stable could turn into a donkey at times of bad luck, etc.

Another category consists of internationally known **proverbs on exaggeration**, where the opposition is formed of a remarkably small and a huge animal, and the small animal is turned into the large one: in Estonian proverbs it is usually a fly that is made into an elephant, but the fly might be substituted with, say, a gnat, a flea, etc., and the elephant with an ox, a camel, a lion, etc.

There is yet another internationally known body of proverbs, where **a representative of a certain species is excluded from the genus, or a subspecies from the species**: a mare is not a horse; goats are not livestock; a magpie is not a bird; a ruff is not a fish, and many others. This body of proverbs (like several others) is not limited to zoological images only, but spreads also to other semantical fields: a *Zaporozhets* is not a car; a bedbug is not meat; a kopeck is not money; an apron is not a garment; a woman is not a person; an inhabitant of Hiiumaa is not a man; etc., etc. Also such single statements tend to merge and link together.

A parallel group of proverbs shows compassion to such rejects and **includes them among the species**: a crow is a bird, too; an öre is money, too; flea is meat, too, etc. (further examples about figurative lexica and links see, for example, Krikmann 1997: 162–164.).

Another distinctive group concerns the **problems with identifying animals** (also other objects beside them), resulting either from darkness, or otherwise disturbed perception, dullness, inexperience,

emotional state, envy, greed, etc. of the perceiver. Korean and Japanese proverbs note that it really is difficult to tell a crow from a raven. The British have a saying about the people who are incapable of distinguishing things that: *He knows not a pig from a dog*, the Russians: *Индюшки от воробья не распознает* [He can't tell a turkey from a sparrow]. A coward thinks of the smallest animal as big and dangerous: a mouse as an elephant in Tajik and Uzbek proverbs; a dog as a wolf or a kitten as a bear among the Udmurts. At nights, when it's dark and scary, misperception is extremely common, but on the other hand all cats are grey in the dark. And the neighbour's hen looks like a goose probably in the whole Eurasia; according to an Udmurtian proverb the neighbour's calf looks like a cow, or a cow like a horse, etc.

Changes and conformities to species lead to the **individual similarities and differences of a parent and a son** (apparently, this group does not belong among the categories of identity any more): arguing that like father, like son; that the young learn everything from the old; that not all the sons of an animal are alike, etc.

Besides, there are two special groups of sayings concerning animal identity that deserve some closer attention. In them, despite all their structural and semantic variability, there is a “surface semantic” (i.e. literal) invariant present, either a duality in the individual's species', or a 'contradiction as regards its species (or sex)'.

5. ZOOHYBRIDS AND ZOOLOGICAL ABSURDITIES

A borderline case of this type of utterances is found in sayings in which the individual is excluded from two or more species or sub-species. From this we can conclude that the individual lacks some defining or specific characteristic. The evaluative connotation here is consistently negative:

Ни пав, ни ворона [Neither peacock nor crow] (Russian: Rybn. 65); Neither serpent nor fish (Indonesian: Kol. 13); *Ни нес, ни хорт, ни выжлеу* [Neither mongrel, nor hound, nor retriever] (Russian: D 472); Call it a dog, it has no tail; call it a cow, it has no horns (Tatar: Br. 486). See also Kok. 221.

In general, these types of sayings fall into the paradigm ‘neither this nor that’ in which referents other than animals can also appear.

The basic mass of this type of paremiological material, however, falls into two subclasses. These are sayings in which the main image can be characterized either as a **zoohybrid** or a **zoological absurdity**.

Zoohybrids

Sayings involving zoohybrids characteristically have a parallel and usually non-implicative structure. They illustrate very clearly how vague the paremiological boundary can be, on the one hand between structures relying on identification and comparison (i.e. metaphor and simile forms) and on the other hand those making use of parallelism involving analogy and contrast. (Ingrid Sarv, for example, has pointed this out on numerous occasions in her work on Estonian sayings).

The purest form of zoohybrids are somatic hybrids, i.e., creative images found in saying about creatures with the body parts of two different animals (for example, ‘head – tail’, ‘mouth – tail’, ‘teeth – tail’, ‘skin – teeth’, ‘skin – heart’ and other combinations), or where one animal is found in the skin of another. Alongside these descriptive types of sayings, we also encounter negative generalisations where the hybrid creations are considered somehow as being impossible or improper. It is often difficult to interpret zoohybrids found in the materials of peoples, who for us might seem exotic, with complete accuracy, and even in principle the zoohybrid might just refer to some vague juxtapositioning of inappropriate parts or aspects of something or somebody. Usually, however, such somatic and animal terms are clearly motivated at the semantic level of the saying. Imaginary figures (usually metonymies) based on body parts can be found at every step of the way in proverbs and phraseological sayings and as a rule they can be made sense of in terms of the function of the body parts in question, or according to their position in the aggregate whole or even to their external appearance, often with an additional metaphoric extension into the mental, ethic or social spheres (for example, *tail* → ‘wag’ → ‘suck up to’, *tail* → ‘back end’ → ‘subordinate or follower or some such thing’, *tail* → ‘some-

thing relatively long and thin and often curved' → 'line-up or queue'). Zoological terms are found as opposites in such stereotypical comparisons as 'large/small animal', 'brave/cowardly animal', 'predatory/benign animal', 'sly/barefaced predator', 'beautiful/ugly animal', 'noble/base animal', etc.

The following examples illustrate some of the possible somatic zoohybrids.

Head – Tail

The tail of a peacock, but the head of a crow (Mordvin: Sam. 286); The head of a tiger, but the tail of a serpent (Chinese: Tishk. [1] 38); A fish as far as its tail is concerned, a serpent as far as its head is concerned (Tamil: VA 35); The head of a dragon, and the tail of a serpent (Japanese: Fount. 548); A head like an elephant's, but a mouse's wee tail (Vietnamese: Br. 150)

Mouth – Tail, Tooth – Tail

Лисей хвост и волчей рот [The tail of a fox, the mouth of a wolf] (Russian: Ruk. 91 and many others)

Sometimes these appear in more developed proverbial contexts or sayings, such as:

Не всегда волчей рот имей – иногда и лисей хвост [You do not always need to have the mouth of a wolf, sometimes you also need the tail of a fox] (Russian: Ruk. 100); *Ныне надобен не столько рот волчий, как лисий хвост* [Nowadays we need, not so much the mouth of a wolf as the tail of a fox] (Russian: Ruk. 161); *Тут надо и волчий зуб и лисий хвост* [Here we need both the teeth of a wolf as well as the tail of a fox] (Russian: D 947)

These often also appear as Russian loan proverbs, for example, Mordvin (Sam. 283) and Uyghur (SK 688)

Miscellaneous Body Parts

The teeth of a dog, the skin of a pig (Turkish: Br. 529); He has the tail of a fox, but the eyes of a wolf (Mordvin: Sam. 284); The

stomach of an ox, but the mouth of a bird (Ossetian: Ab. 105); The head of a rabbit, but the eyes of a serpent (Chinese: Tishk. [1] 50); The face of a doe, but the heart of a tiger (Thai: Br. 463); The tongue of a nightingale, but the heart of a wolf (Udmurt: Kral. 57; cf. Per. 241)

One Animal in Another Animal's Skin or Feathers

A jackal in the skin of a sheep (Indonesian: Kol. 35); A tiger in the skin of a goat (Telugu: Br. 514); *An ass in a lion's skin* (English: T A351); A lamb in the skin of a tiger (Korean: TKKCh 57); A fox in the skin of a tiger (Japanese: Br. 604)

The following is an example of a transitional form with the formula 'one species does not turn into another':

Even if the jackal puts on a lion's skin, it will not become a lion (Hindi: Br. 604)

And the same as they appear in full proverb form:

An ass in the skin of tiger will trample the field (Mongolian: DR 17); Even in the skin of a tiger, an ass does not frighten anyone (Chinese: Tishk. [2] 40)

The following examples are with feathers:

A wild cat in the feathers of a hen (Indonesian: Kol. 12); *Ворона в павлиньих перьях* [A crow in the feathers of a peacock] (Russian: D 738; cf. also Vietnamese: Br. 175)

From here, it is just a short step to the motif of putting on airs or 'donning another's feathers'. The actual bird in question may or may not be named. For example:

Vaivainen lintu toisen höyhenillä ittees koreilee [It is a poor bird that adorns itself with another's feathers] (Finnish: Sl 507); Do not boast with another's feathers (Latvian: FS 855, 5601); *Ära ehi ennast vōõra sulgedega* [Do not adorn yourself with another's feathers] (Estonian: EV 520)

Generalized Negative Transformations

A dog will not grow the fur of a wolf (Latvian: FS 1374, 4275; cf. also Livonian: LV 365); Elephant tusks will not grow in the mouth of a dog 'A bad person cannot have good thoughts' (Chinese: Br. 283); A pigeon will not grow the claws of a hawk (Komi: Ples. 44); Elk-headed horses do not exist (Chinese: Tishk. [1] 38); A peacock's tail does not suit a crane (Mongolian: DR 45)

Also compare the following:

An ox with the horns of a cow has no strength, a cow with the horns of an ox has no milk (Kazakh: Br. 232)

Everything can get blended together and be mixed with everything else. The zoohybrid image might consist of somatic components only in one half (see for example group 2 below) or not at all. In the latter instance the hybrid might be delimited only with syntactoformulaic expressions of the type:

Half..., half... ~ Sometimes..., at other times...

Half partridge, half quail (Hindi: Br. 601); Part serpent, part eel (Indonesian: Kol. 34); Sometimes a cat, at other times a dog (Chinese: Tishk. [1] 38); *Где лисой, где волком* [Here like a fox, there like a wolf] (Russian: D 947); Man is at times a fox, at other times a lion (Kurdish: Cel. 200)

Empirically, we can also find many cycles or paradigms where the amphibiousness of the species in question is much more clearly specified than in the above examples. Some of the more productive of these are:

(1) On the surface (before your eyes ~ in words) it is one thing; in reality (behind your back ~ in deed) it is another

Contrasted here is a benign (or dangerous, but clever) animal with an obvious predator, or a simple-minded animal with a clever one. So far we have purposely tried to avoid using the example of 'wolf and sheep' to illustrate somatic hybrids, even though in reality they are quite numerous. Firstly, as far as their denotative content is concerned, all of them actually belong here, and secondly, we want

to use this as an opportunity to demonstrate how many syntactically and expressively different (albeit synonymous) transformations can cluster together around one zoohybridical cliché. ¹

The motif of the *wolf in sheep's clothing* is a *locus communis* with an extremely wide distribution that is clearly a result of the influence of the Bible (Math. 7:15). See for example: English: T W614; German: W V 378, 379; Latvian: FS 927, 4421; Estonian: KM (approximately 35 sayings); Russian: D 50, 660; Rybn. 78); Mari: Ib. 79; Persian: Krgl. 267, 274; Uzbek: Kal. [2] 170). Cf. also: PP 580; Mih. 40; Stev. 2555)

So far we have glossed over relevant Estonian material in an unseemly fashion. At this point, let us cite a few of examples from Estonia as well:

Lamba karva all on hundi nahk [Underneath the sheep's wool is the skin of a wolf] (KM); *Hundi hambad on alati lamba villades peitus* [A wolf's teeth are always hidden in sheep's wool] (EV 1604); *Lamba nahk, aga hundi hambad* [The skin of a sheep, but the teeth of a wolf] (KM); *Lamba nägu, hundi hamba* [The face of a sheep, the teeth of a wolf] (EV 5427); (*Päält*) *lamba nägu, (seest) hundi tegu* [(On the surface) a sheep's face, (inside) a wolf's deeds] (EV 5429; KM); *Suu een kui voonakene, säla takan kui kiskja susi* [Before your mouth ('face') like a sweet lamb, behind your back like a murderous wolf] (EV 10884); *Pealtnäha vaga lammas, seest kiskja hunt* [To look at it, a gentle sheep, inside, a murderous wolf] (EV 13192); *Vaga kui lammas, kiskja kui hunt* [Gentle as a sheep, murderous as a wolf] (KM)

We can find somatic and non-somatic examples from other languages as well:

It has a sheep's skin but the teeth of a wolf (Ossetian: Ab. 20); The skin of a sheep, but the heart of a wolf (Chinese: Tishk. [1] 49); The tongue of a sheep, but the fangs of a wolf (Lak: Br. 348); On the outside a sheep, on the inside a wolf (Udmurt: Per. 196; also Tajik: Kal. [1] 167)

And some non-somatic examples with other animals:

В глазах – как лисица, а за глазами – как волк [In your face, like a fox, behind your face, like a wolf] (Russian: Ruk. 72); *Some*

faine themselves to be as simple as a lambe, which are as craftie as a foxe (English: T L34); *Eistäpäin kun lehtrepo, taakkoopäin kun pureva mato* [In front like a fawning fox, behind like a stinging serpent] (Finnish: Spk 27; cf. also Karelian: KSp 462); *Fawning as a fox, mean as a dog* (Yakut: Em: 108); *Eistäpäin kun liposen lintu ja takkoo kun purova koera* [In front like a chirping bird, behind like a biting dog] (Finnish: SV 16); *Прост, как свинья, а лукав, как змея* [As simple-minded as a pig, but as sly as a serpent] (Russian: D 661)

(2) In appearance or gait one thing; in spirit something else

Here we usually find a beautiful and/or noble animal contrasted with a foolish one. We will use primarily Russian examples to illustrate this group:

Осанка львиная, да ум куриный [The gait of a lion, and the wits of a hen] (Russian: Rybn. 64, 71); *Видом орел, а умом тетерев* [As for the face, an eagle; as for wits, a grouse] (Russian: D 698; Rybn. 71)

The following Udmurt example exhibits a possible heavy Russian influence:

In appearance an eagle, as for intelligence, a sparrow (Udmurt: Per. 62)

In Russia we also come across semi-somatic variants such as:

Рожею сокол ~ орел, а умом тетерев [As for the face, an eagle; as for wits, a grouse] (Russian: D 698; compare Ruk. 61 and 108); *Ус соминый, а разум псиный* [The moustache of a sheatfish, but the wits of a dog] (Russian: D 697)

(3) One thing when eating; something else when working

Here are usually a big, strong (~ swift) and a small, weak (~ slow) animal contrasted. Besides the basic form with 'eats much, but works little' we can also encounter the reverse of this 'eats little, works much', similarly 'eats much, works much' as well as 'eats little, works little'. In form, these are typically sayings of the 'but' type, yet we can see that the generalized implication also goes in both

directions ('eats → works' and 'works → eats'). In Estonia we encounter on the augmentative side primarily an ox, for example in such basic forms as:

Ta on täi tööle, aga härg sööma [He is a louse at work, but an ox at eating] (KM; cf. also EV 5380); *Söömas oled härg, tööle kui kana* [You are an ox while eating, at work (you are) a hen] (KM); *Härga sööma, kukke tegema* [An ox at eating, a cock at work] (KM)

We also encounter the reverse forms:

Härg tööle, kana sööma [An ox at working, a hen at eating] (KM); *Kuke sööma, härga tegema* [A cock at eating, an ox at work] (KM). The latter combination is popular in Latvia as well, see for example (FS 1650, 1111).

See (EV 1844; 1846; 3310) where the animal combination is missing or they do not form a hybrid for analogous proverbial forms in Estonian.

In Latvia, the voracious eater can also show up as a horse:

Eats like a horse, works like a cock ~ sparrow ~ fly (respectively FS 1106, 3106; 796, 3973; 508, 1369)

Compare the Finnish here:

Syöp ku hevone ja tekköö ku täe [Eats like a horse and works like a louse] (Finnish: SV 757)

Other animal pairs can also be found with this basic form. The first member of each pair listed below is the eater:

bear – rabbit (Russian: Ruk 158); eagle – sparrow (Mordvin: Sam. 117); wolf – tortoise (Ossetian: Ab. 14); wolf – badger (Adyghe: Br. 29); camel – donkey (Armenian: Karap. [2] 30; Karap. [3] 102; cf. also Karap. [1] 26); shark ~ whale – (lame) donkey (Tajik: Kal. [1] 120; Br. 452); tiger – (lazy) ox (Mongolian: Br. 389); tiger – lamb (Hindi: Br. 600)

The reverse form is also found:

mouse – ox (Korea: TKKCh 55)

An analogous example from the Udmurt repertoire:

Works like a horse, eats like a cow (Udmurt: Per. 212)

Again, we encounter semi-somatic forms such as:

The work of a cock, but the stomach of a horse (Latvian: FS 1750, 8261)

We are not completely certain how to interpret the following:

While eating like a flea, while working like a louse (Latvian: FS 699, 207) – does the figure of the flea here derive from its small size or its nimbleness?

(4) Outside ~ in the village ~ in battle one; at home something else

Contrasted here are presumably animals that are brave or mean with ones that are meek or clever. The varying combinations of animal characteristics and locations provide for a wide array of different interpretations, such as ‘pretending to be brave in a safe location but in reality the creature is a coward’, ‘pretending to be good in front of others but in reality the creature is mean’, ‘mean to strangers (~ brave in battle) but good to one’s own folk (~ gentle at home)’, etc. It is not always clear which characteristic or behaviour a given animal might be subject to and which of its predicates are actual or feigned. For example:

At home a cock, outside a hen (chick) (Armenian: Karap. [1] 51; Shag. 212; Tati: Br. 497; Aserbaidzhan: Gus. 15; Udmurt: Per. 106); At home a lion, outside a pussycat (Kurdish: Cel. 195; cf. also Armenian: Br. 74); *Zu Haus ein Maulwurf, draussen ein Luchs* (German: B 254, etc), but also: *Zu Hause ein Löwe, draussen ein Lamm* (German: B 110, etc.; cf. also Hindi: Br. 597); *Koin kondii, kylän reboi* [Bear of the home, fox of the village] (Karelian: KSp 173); *Kyyhkynen kylässä, kontio kotona* [A dove in the village, a bear at home] (Finnish: VKS 347); *Kun on kyyhkynen kyläs, niin on koira kotoväjel* [If he is a dove in the

village, then he is a dog among the folks at home] (Finnish: Sl 169); *Kes väljas kassike, see kodu koerake* [Whoever is a pussycat outside, is a dog at home] (Estonian: EV 14489); Goats are dogs at home ‘calm in front of strangers, bickering at home’ (Ovambo: Kuusi 726); To the world like an eagle, in his own home like an ass (Mari: Ib. 92); *A lion in the field, a lamb in the town* (English: TL311)

As far as the Karelian text *Kylän hukku, koin kondii* [Wolf of the village, bear of the home] (KSp 211) is concerned we might be inclined to treat this as meaning ‘mean here and mean there’ if it were not for the fact that appended to this text is an explanation that states ‘at home the creature is even worse than it appears in the village’.

5) Going (to work ~ to battle) one thing; coming back something else

Here we contrast a bigger, high-spirited animal with a smaller, ‘dullard’ of an animal or a slow animal with a swift one. As a result, the interpretations can vary radically: ‘hopes vs. disappointments’ or ‘reluctance vs. readiness’. It is also possible to find contaminations such as ‘undertaking vs. fleeing’. The comparison might also appear within the confines of one and the same species. For example:

Härg minnän, vasik tullan [An ox leaving, a calf coming] (Estonian: EV 1833; cf. also EV 13875); Rushed into battle like an ox, came back like a cow (Ossetian: Ab. 103); Went like a buffalo, came back like an ass (Armenian: Karap. [2] 51); *Sian jalat työhön menessä, koiran jalat kotia tullessa* [Pig’s legs going to work, dog’s legs coming home] (Finnish: Spk 67; cf. also Sl 400, 186)

The Finnish example above opens up one more layer in the zooparemiologic kaleidoscope; different animals + same body parts + something else. Compare for example, the Finnic examples:

Vanhalla (on) variksen silmä, kärjen silmä neitosella [Old folks have the eyes of crows, young maidens, the eyes of woodpeckers] (Finnish: VKS 420; cf. also Sl 516, etc.; Karelian: KSp 555, 556; Estonian: EV 7502, 4947, and many, many others)

The contrast 'slow/swift' are presumably also present in the following redactions:

Comes among people like a goldeneye (bird), leaves like a rabbit (Komi: Ples. 104); Comes like a fox, takes off like a rabbit (Mordvin: Sam. 283)

(6) One behaviour towards the weak ~ subordinates; another behaviour towards the strong ~ superiors

In this group, the strong/weak partner itself is often represented with another animal metaphor resulting in the creation of unique 'diagonal' double comparisons among members of one of the animal duality or among some other 'intermediary species':

A lion among sheep and a sheep among lions (English: T L309); Among hens a cock, but among cocks a chick (Mordvin: Sam. 226; cf. also Mari: Ib. 93); A cat is a lion when catching mice, but a mouse when battling a leopard (Persian: Br. 417); An eagle toward sparrows, but a mouse toward a cat (Japanese: Petr. 76); A lion toward inferiors, a puppy-dog toward superiors (Mongolian: DR 69).²

We can see a spontaneous transformation of somatic hybrids into non-somatic hybrids, degeneration of the 'true hybrid' forms into other zoometamorphic or comparative parallel structures in the context of different places, times and conditions. These then move toward other formulae that were mentioned in the chapter 3 of the article. In addition to the examples listed above, we have a veritable forest of vague, contaminated forms and groups of less productive types as well as types or texts that may perhaps be found only in a single occurrence. Since we cannot hope to cover all of these, let us just cite a few examples from the Russian repertoire:

Рогом козел, а родом осел [As for the trotters, a goat; as for the species, an ass] (D 720); *Шерсть мышь, да слава рысь* [The fur of a mouse, but the fame of a lynx] (Ruk. 167); *Наряд соколий, а походка воронья* [The adornments ('feathers') of an eagle, the gait of a crow] (D 586); *Сердце соколье, а смельство воронье* [The heart of an eagle, but the courage of a crow] (Ruk. 34); *Видом сокол, а голосом ворона* [As for the appearance, an eagle, but as for the voice a crow] (D 698); *Голос соловьиный, да*

рыло свиное [The voice of a nightingale, but the snout of a pig] (D 517); *Запел соловьем, да кончил петухом* [It started to sing like the nightingale and finished (its song) like a cock] (Rybn. 77); *Рябее сусличка, голосистее сверчка* [Weaker than a suslik, but louder than a cricket] (Russian: D 477); *Глядит лисой, а пахнет волком* [Looks like a fox, but smells like a wolf] (D 660); *Блудлив как кошка, труслив как заяц* [Mischievous as a cat, timid as a rabbit] (Ruk. 168)

In addition to other permutations, the two-part zoohybrids can usually be developed into even longer ones or they can be a part of longer constructions where animal figures alternate with humans or various somatic elements, etc. Often such passages are created when someone has been placed in a difficult or challenging situation (becomes a servant or a daughter-in-law, is away on a long journey, etc.) where they require a variety of different abilities and virtues. Some examples of these are:

Hää olnu' ku inemisel olõss kahru joud, rebäse kavalus ja jänese jalad [It would have been good if a person had the strength of a bear, the cleverness of a fox and the feet of a rabbit] (Estonian: KKI); *Nuorella työllä pitää olla siijan suu, salakan vatsa, lammin ahvenen ajatukset* [A young girl should have the mouth of whitefish, the belly of a blay (fish) and the thoughts of perch (living) in a pond] (Finnish: Sl 274, etc.; Karelian variants see KSp 87, 460, 502); *Kun mänet suureh joukkoh réveskäksi, pidää olla kiurun kieli, linnun mieli, lambiahvenen ajatus* [When you go as a new bride into a large clan, you need to have the tongue of a swallow, the disposition of a bird, the thoughts of a perch in a pond] (Karelian: KSp 491); *A good servant should have the back of an ass, the tongue of a sheep and the snout of a swine* (English: T S233); *A good surgeon must have an eagle's eye, a lion's heart, and a lady's hand* (English: T S1013)

Even seven-part structures can occur:

To travel the world safely one must have the eye of a falcon, the ears of an ass, the countenance of an ape, the tongue of a mountebank, the shoulders of a camel, the mouth of a hog, and the feet of a hind (English T W888)

The usual two-part formations are also found in this cycle of material. (See for example, Estonian: EV 3997; 4533; 7553; 10364; cf. also 10369)

In finishing this section, I would like to point out one more interesting group, which is prevalent in eastern and Caucasian materials. These are often found as transitional forms leading into longer narratives. In general the animals participating in these examples are usually hybrids with respect to their body structure, means of locomotion, and even in name. With respect to their circumstance, these hybrids can appear first as one and then as the other. Many eastern peoples have for example an expression for the ostrich, which is literally 'bird-camel' (for example, Turkish 'devekushu'). This is a play on words based on texts such as:

They tell the ostrich: 'Carry this burden!' it answers: 'But I'm a bird.' They say: 'Fly!' it answers: 'But I'm a camel.' (Persian: Krgl. 138; cf. also Turkish: Br. 531; Aserbaidzhan: Gus. 23; Avarian: Naz. 60, 140)

Analogous items also occur with bats:

When they started to tax mice, then the bat flew off. When it was the birds' turn, it merely grinned a toothsome grin (Aserbaidzhan: Gus. 31; cf. also Ossetian: Ab. 66)

Or analogies with oxen:

When they came up to the cow with the milking pail, she called herself an ox. When they came with the plough, she called herself a cow (Georgian: Br. 194; cf. Abkhaz: Br. 24)

Also compare the following:

When it is time to plough, he will be among the calves, when it is time to eat in the meadow, he will be among the cows (Telugu: Br. 507)

Zoological absurdities

Creating communicative 'noises', and this includes the reduction of semantic redundancy in a text, is a general and very fundamental characteristic in the creation of any trope. Particularly sharp de-

fects in redundancy are seen as being absurd, which can often create a comic effect. Consequently, the absurd (or rather the comic) is widely encountered in folklore. Riddles are absurd by the very principles underlying the genre. Stories about difficult tasks or clever answers are based on the absurd to a great extent (AT 920–929, 875 and others), jokes about numskulls (AT 1200–1349), the group of funny stories AT 1875–1965), the so-called English anecdotes, limericks, the Estonian cycle of runic songs about ‘wondrous events (*imed*)’, and other runic songs, many children’s songs and vague (as far as their actual genre and function is concerned) non-sung couplets such as: *Särk tuli püksist, vaatas kella / ütles: ‘Küll on tore olla!* [A shirt came out of some pants, it looked at the time: ‘My,’ it exclaimed, ‘But life is here just too fine!’]

There are many others that can be included here.

At every step of the way we can encounter the absurd in proverbs and sayings. Juri Levin (1982) has written about this in a wonderful squib on absurdities, puns, paradoxes, and oxymorons in Russian proverbs and sayings. In the following section, which we have conditionally called zoological absurdities, we will look at a certain cluster of proverbial absurdities, sayings whose nucleus consists of a phrase in which there is an animal figure, quite specifically determined as to its class, species, sex and so on, that is bequeathed with characteristics which that animal either lacks in reality or is believed to lack (but these characteristics are possessed by other animals). The animal may have the ‘wrong’ colours, more often non-existent body parts (limbs or sensory organs) or physiological functions and abilities (for example, the ability to move about and live in certain environments, have offspring) or an attempt is made to derive useful products from the ‘wrong’ animals (such as wool, milk) or other ridiculous manipulations are undertaken with the animal.

Empirically we can find in materials from around the world examples of the following:

- a) white crows, ravens, sparrows
- b) fish, frogs with ears
- c) dogs, cats, horses, asses, camels, tigers, rabbits, serpents, frogs with horns
- d) calves with fangs; hens, cocks, frogs with teeth

- e) fish with a voice; singing fish; barking cats; pigs barking at squirrels; crowing ducks, hens; clucking crows; whistling crabs, hens
- f) coughing hens, lice; sneezing rams
- g) serpents with feet; four-legged hens; pigs with (non-cloven) hooves; fish with thighs
- h) cats, camels, frogs with wings; flying dogs, cats, horses, cows, calves, buffalos, pigs, goats, bears, moles, toads
- i) diving cats, pigs
- j) squirrels chasing mice; cats chasing rabbits
- k) frogs with tails
- l) oxen, pigs with feathers; pigs, asses, crabs, frogs, tortoises with wool; shearing pigs, serpents
- m) getting a fleece from dogs; mutton from pigs
- n) milk from birds, hens, oxen; (colostrum) milk from wolves; butter from rams; cheese from billy-goats; milking bulls, billy-goats, rams, male animals, hens, cocks; oxen, boars, hens with udders
- o) pregnant oxen; oxen, boars, rams, tom-cats, barren animals, male animals giving birth
- p) bulls suckling calves
- q) female animals being castrated
- r) female animals with penises
- s) male hens
- t) oxroe
- u) cocks, dogs, cats, cows, piglets, rabbits, foxes, bears, male animals laying eggs
- v) pissing hens, cocks, cranes, geese
- w) farting cocks, cows, oxen, dead asses, mares

At a very generic level all these phrases consisting of absurdities can be seen as being synonymous. They can nevertheless, be divided into fuzzy categories of cycles and sub-cycles, many of which overlap. For example, within the cycle of texts involving limbs and motion, we can find subsets based on legs or wings and flying, or within the cycle of sex substitutions, we can find subsets about milk and milking or giving birth, etc. The zoologic terms can vary widely within one cycle and the same animal can appear in many different cycles, two or more nuclear figures can get contaminated, and any zoological absurdity can get contaminated with other kinds of

impossibilities. As was the case with the hybrids, so too with the absurdities, there are a number of typical contexts the nuclear animal is usually found in. To be sure, while the context of the hybrids usually manifests itself in a certain parallel structure ('one or another body part', 'on the one side, on the other side', 'under a certain set of conditions, under another set of conditions') then the functional context of zoological absurdities, as a rule, lies in the stating or resolving of a contradiction contained by the nuclear figure itself. Here too, as was the case earlier, there are a few productive stereotypes and very many exceptional single variants. And just as we did above, here too, we will provide an overview of these particular contextual types from the empirical body of data. (In view of the fact that much of what is presented here consists of material in translation, there may be certain mistakes as far as the types presented are concerned. Even with the texts in their original form, there may be problems in interpretation, for example, it is not always clear with sayings containing optative verbal forms, whether we are dealing with a thought, a speech act or an event or whether we are to interpret the absurd manipulation as having successfully taken place or not, and so on).

(1) Attempt is made to render the absurd less inconsistent in some typical way by, perhaps reinterpreting the predicate somehow. To admit, we found very few such cases in our empirical material. For example, let us look at the following Estonian text:

Härja piim on paksem kui lehma piim [The milk of an ox is thicker than the milk of a cow] (EV 1325, red. B) which, for some reason, has a word for word counterpart in Chechen and Ingush traditions (cf. Br. 605). In this text, the 'ox milk' refers to the benefits derived from the animal in question. Analogous comparisons between oxen and horses are found in Karelian and Latvian materials (cf. KSp 79, 235; FS 527, 23819).

Another example of an Estonian metaphor:

Pool musta, pool valget, nagu kuke muna [Half black, half white, like the egg of a cock] (Estonian: KM). In this example, the egg is understood as being the faecal material of the cock. (Analogous examples occur in Finnish proverbs and similes of this type

with the expression *kananpaska* [chicken shit] (e.g. VKS 246; SI 13, 25, 107, 359; SV 18, 789)

(2) Statements of fact with zoological absurdities (including epistemic as well as optative forms)

(2a) The text consists of just a single noun phrase or absurd action where the context of the nuclear figure is lacking and the meaning of the phrase might be given in the explanation:

A white crow ~ raven (English: T C859); *Курячье вымя, свиные рожки* [The udder of a hen, the horns of a pig ‘nothing at all’] (Russian: D 547); The thigh of a fish (Udmurt: Per. 241); *A trout Hamlet with four legs* (English: T H61); *Bayard of ten toes* (English: T B110); A pig’s down feathers (Mari: Ib. 104); Oxroe, crabfat ‘useless work, pointless effort’ (Hungarian: Nagy ö79)

The following examples illustrate how animals can be manipulated:

To shear wool (~ fur) from the backs of tortoises (Korean: Br. 322); To milk oxen (Tajik: Kal. [1] 158)

(2b) Epistemic forms, for example:

I thought calves could fly ‘I do not believe a word of it’] (Hungarian: Nagy b1069)

(2c) Optative forms (an agent wants or attempts the impossible)

(2c1) The agent is an animal, who dreams of either a new means of locomotion or some protective device:

Even a toad would wish to get teeth (Abkhaz: Br. 24); A frog would like to have wings ‘a poor man would like to fly’] (Ovambo: Kuusi 54)

(2c2) The agent is (presumably) a human being who primarily wishes for something utilitarian:

To ask a horse for horns (Indonesian: Kol. 23); To look for chicken teeth (Malagasy: Korn. 93); To look for a fish’s voice (Udmurt: Per. 227); To look for an ox’s udder (Udmurt: Per. 219); *Захотел*

молочка от бычка [He wanted to get milk from an ox] (Russian: D 241); To look for a calf under an ox (Armenian: Karap. [3] 64; Shag. 559; cf. also Turkish: Br. 530; Aserbaidzhan: Gus. 110; Hungarian: Nagy b669); *Щунает петуха – не будет ли яйца* [Feels the cock up whether there might not be an egg (there)] (Russian: Ruk. 117; D457, etc.); *Захотел птичьего молока* [He wanted to get bird's milk] (Russian: D 862); *A draught of hen's milk* (English: T D583)

(2c3) The agent is another animal:

The pig asks for horns, the goat will not give them (Latvian: FS 1114, 210; cf. also Livonian: LV 808); *Konn tahab vähjä käest villu* [The frog wants to get wool from a crab] (Estonian: KM); *Vuun lätt vähä käest villu otsma* [The little lamb went to ask some wool from a crab] (Estonian: KM; cf. EV 14450); *The glorious sheep said to the goat, Give me some of your wool* (English: T S298)

(2d) The absurd is a quote or part of someone else's statement, question or command; the speaker is often a braggart or liar or perhaps just a contrary person:

He will say the crow is white (English: T C852);

The liar will maintain that the crow's belly is white (Korean: TTKCh 28); compare also: In an argument, a white crow will be black, and a black crow, white (Yakut: Em. 55); The rabbit I caught has three horns 'said about a braggart's tall tales' (Malayalam: Br. 379); You ask me about the ears of a frog (Ovambo: Kuusi 62); The chicken ~ bird has only one leg 'said about the statements of a stubborn person' (Persian: Krgl. 278, 476); When he catches a hen, it has four legs 'about a braggart' (Telugu: Br. 505); compare: *Täämbe om lammas viie jalaga, hommen ei ole kolmegegi* [Today the sheep has five legs, tomorrow it will not even have three] (Estonian: EV 12402); *Vaata, naine, kui siga lendas!* [Look, woman! Did you see how that pig flew! 'a quote when some elaborate undertaking fails'] (Estonian: KM); A braggart can milk a barren cow with his words (Kirghiz: Sham. 225); Even the cock of a boastful fellow will lay an egg (Udmurt: Kral.123)

In eastern repertoires, we find the absurdities in dialogue form where they are divided among the lines of two speakers:

I say: 'Male', but he says: 'Milk it!' (Kurdish: Cel. 351; compare the Persian: Br. 434); also compare: Milking oxen (Kurdish: Br. 339); Asking for billy-goat milk (Tamil: VA 40)

(2e) *Let it be..., if only... -forms.* With these texts, it is not always clear whether they should be interpreted as an unspoken wish or a reply. The majority of these are eastern in origin:

Let it be a squirrel, as long as it catches mice (Bengali: Br. 136); Let it be a billy-goat, as long as it gives milk (Turkmen: Karr. 134; cf. also Tajik: Kal. [1] 294; Uzbek: Kal. [2] 305); What ox! It can be the Devil himself, as long as you can get to drink the milk (Tatar: Br. 486); *По мне хоть пес, только б яйца нес* [As far as I am concerned it can be a mongrel dog, as long as it lays eggs] (Russian: D 694; cf. Ruk. 149)

(3) The absurdity is negated or can be interpreted as having been negated

(3a) Direct negation in the indicative

(3a1) Universal negated statements: 'impossible things do not exist', 'you cannot see ~ hear ~ achieve them'. Very often in this group, the zoological absurdities get contaminated or a human counterpart is offered. For example:

There are no white crows (Tamil: VA 48); Horns do not grow on the heads of horses (Korean: Br. 322); A cat will not grow horns (Indonesian: Kol. 22); also compare the following: A dog will not grow horns, but a reindeer calf is born without horns (Komi: Ples. 171); A rabbit does not have horns, and a tortoise will not grow a fur coat (Japanese: Petr. 80; cf. Korean: TKKCh 70); A frog does not bite and a Brahman does not fight (Telugu: Br. 508; cf. Tamil: VA 11); A duck will not ever crow (Krio: Diachk. 85); A hen does not crow 'Even though a woman might desire some man she is ashamed to say so' ~ 'A woman does not rule' (Ovambo: Kuusi 421); You cannot hear the voice of a fish (Udmurt: Kral. 189); You will not find hair (~ bristles) on a chicken and you will not hear the voice of a fish (Udmurt: Per. 154; cf. Kral. 190); You

are not going to meet a three-legged frog (Chinese: Tishk. [1] 39); A serpent has no legs, a fish has no ears (Japanese: Petr. 82); No one has succeeded in seeing the legs of a serpent, the eyes of an ant or the bread of the soil (Persian: Krgl. 148); No one has succeeded in seeing the legs of a serpent, getting milk from a hen and bread from the mullah (Tajik: Br. 457); *Kröten lernen niemals fliegen* (German: B 332); A tortoise will not climb a tree, a frog will not take off in flight (Turkmen: Karr. 147); A woman has no wits, a frog has no tail (Kazakh: Br. 232); Cats do not have two tails (Udmurt: Kral. 189); *Ei kirpullen saa kahta persettä tehä* [You cannot put two arses onto a flea] (Finnish: Sl 133); You will not get musk from a polecat (Tamil: VA 66); You cannot get a good pelt from a dog's tail (Korean: TKKCh 58); You are not going to get wool by shearing dogs (Mari: 51); You do not get pork fat from a dog 'It is difficult to fight against a bad disposition' (Hungarian: Nagy k2300); *От быка ~ с козла – ни шерсти, ни молока* [You cannot get wool or milk from an ox ~ a billy-goat] (Russian: Rybn. 120; D 724; cf. also Latvian and Lithuanian variants PP 353, red. B); *Из козла молока нечево доуть* [You cannot get any milk from a billy-goat] (Russian: Ruk. 83); You do not milk a hen, do not expect a calf from a pig (Komi: Ples. 94); I have not seen a calf under a bull yet (Hungarian: Nagy b690); A cat does not lay eggs (Korean: TKKCh 58)

(3a2) Negating formulae of the type *everything else...., but not...* In the empirical data, the nuclei of the texts belonging to this group are on the whole connected to *bird's milk* with such additional conditions as 'a rich man has...', 'for money you can get...', 'in a large city you can find ...' (compare group 4b below). Typical in this group are comparisons with items you cannot buy:

Все есть, кроме птичьего молока [There is everything except bird's milk] (Russian: D 100; cf. Mari: Ib. 130); *Muuda kaikkie on, vai ei linnunmaiduu da siansarvista lusikkua* [There is everything else, but not bird's milk or a spoon made from pig horn] (Karelian: KSp 249); *Все есть у богатого, а птичьего молока нет* [A rich person has everything except bird's milk] (Russian: D 862); *Kõikõ saat ilmah raha iist, aga imä armu ja tsirgu piimä ei saa* [You can get anything in this world for money, except mother's love and bird's milk] (Estonian: EV 9454); *Kaikki rahalla*

saa, paitti Jumalan armoo ja linnun piimää [With money you can get everything except God's love and bird's milk] (Finnish: Spk 187); *В Москве все найдешь, кроме птичьего молока* [In Moscow you can find everything except bird's milk] (Russian: D 331); *Kaikki muuta Pietärist suap muttei linnumaituo ja ommoa emmuo* [You can get everything else in St. Petersburg, but not bird's milk or your own mother] (Finnish: Spk 378)

A Finnish example with other nuclei:

Kaikk on nähty kaima kulta, ei nähty kanan kusevan, kuultu kukon pierasevan [Everything has been seen, dear friend, but a hen pissing has not been seen or a cock farting has not been heard] (Finnish: Spk 56)

(3a3) Formulae that negate the absurdity as a statement. The following are some stereotypical Finnic examples:

Se on huitua, että sika lentää ja kärpänen märehitii [It is drivel that pigs can fly and flies can chew cud] (Finnish: Sl 50); *Satua se on, että kissa sukeltaa* [It is a fairytale that cats can dive] (Finnish: Sl 392); *Kyllä se on kukkua, että kana kusee* [Certainly it is a tall tale that hens piss] (Finnish: Sl 155); *Satua se on, että kukko munii* [It is a fable that cocks lay eggs] (Karelian: KS p 446)

Also compare:

Нечего и говорить, что курица не доит [You do not need to say that you cannot milk hens] (Russian: Ruk. 128); *Говорят, что за морем кур доят, а как поехал за молоком, так назвали дураком* [They say that beyond the sea they milk hens, but when I went to get some, they called me an idiot] (Russian: Rybn. 190)

(3a4) Formulae of the type *it is not necessary... or /an animal/ does not have to...:*

Ei Suames pruukat sian pääs sarvei [In Finland it is not customary for a pig to have horns on its head] (Finnish: Sl 420); *Ei pruukata torpis tervaa eikä sianpääs sarvia* [In a hovel they do not use tar nor horns on pig's head] (Finnish: Spk 210); A tiger does not need a second tail (Korean: TKKCh 57)

(3b) Universal imperative forms negating (or implying negation of) the absurd opinion ~ hope ~ desire ~ attempt:

Do not wait for an ass to grow horns (Mongolian: DR 16 and 45); also compare: Do not wait for a goat's horns to grow to the sky or a camel's tail to the ground (Mongolian: DR 16); Just look for horns on a pig, an udder on a hen or a sheath for a sickle (Udmurt: Kral. 189); *Ära taha, et siga lendab* [Do not wish for pigs to fly 'do not want excessively ~ the impossible ~ to cheat'] (Estonian: KM); *Elä usko rakas sielu, et kissa lentää* [Do not believe, dear soul, that cats can fly] (Finnish: Sl 365; cf. Karelian: KSp 418); *Älä veli usko, jotta kissa lentäh da sika sukeltah* [Do not believe, brother, that cats can fly and pigs can dive] (Karelian: KSp 565); Do not think a wasp to have honey (Udmurt: Kral. 173); Do not expect a cock to lay eggs (Udmurt: Per. 64). Also compare Latvian: FS 1376, 1622

(3c) Miscellaneous rhetorical questions that can be interpreted as a negation:

Konspa se korppi valkenoo ja joutsen mustaaks tulloo? [When ravens turn white and swans become black] (Finnish: Spk 21); *Kes küütu koera on näinud ehk meesterahva nuttu?* [Who has ever seen a dog with a white stripe down its back or a man's crying?] (Estonian: EV 5246); Who's going to give horns to a dog? (Krio: Diachk. 385); A tiger bites – what does it need horns for? (Korean: Br. 327); *Где слыхано, чтобы медведь летал* [Where has anybody heard that bears fly] (Russian: D 846); *Mil kassid munevad?* [When do cats lay eggs?] (Estonian: KM); Who knows where cats lay their eggs? (Persian: Krgl. 262). Also compare: *Kuka on kukonmunasta keikkaukset keittänyttä?* [Who has cooked a surprise from cock eggs] (Finnish: VKS 236)

(3d) Constructions of the type *When..., then...* which can be read as 'never'. These texts can be of the simple *When..., then...* type or they can express, in general or specific terms, what might happen (or would be possible) if the absurdity becomes real. In eastern repertoires these generally take the form of saying containing the absurdity:

When the camel's tail grows to the ground ~ touches the ground, then... (examples from Tajik: Kal. (1) 196); Uzbek: Kal. (2) 187; Abdur. 127; Uyghur: SK 2092); cf. also: As long a you have not kept your promise will grow (Armenian: Karap. [3] 80); Until what you have said happens will grow (Armenian: Br. 84)

They can also be in dialogue form:

They asked: 'When are you coming?'; he replied: 'When the Camel's tail...' (Kurdish: Cel. 132)

The following are some more examples of the same with other images:

I will go when there are white crows (Latvian: FS 1110, 250); When serpents grow horns, tortoises grow moustaches, and the water lizard grows a mane (Thai: Br. 463); When rabbits grow horns and calves grow fangs (Mongolian: DR 83); When cats grow horns (Malayan, Indonesian: Br. 365); *Когда рак свистнет и рыба запоет* [When crabs whistle and fish start to sing] (Russian: Rybn. 141); That will happen when buffalos fly (Hungarian: Nagy b746); *Когда солнце орла пожрет, камень на воде всплывет, свинья на белку залает, тогда дурак поумнеет* [When the sun scorches eagles, rock float on water, pigs bark at squirrels, that is when an idiot will become smart] (Russian: D 439); *When the frog has hair thou wilt be good* (English: T F766); *You will be good when the goose pisses* (English: T G367); *Laps räägib siis kui kana kuseb ~ kukk peeretab ~ ...* [A child only speaks when the hen pisses ~ when the cock farts] (Estonian: EV 5531); *Тогда ему жениться, когда быки имеют телиться* [It will be time for him to marry when oxen bring forth calves] (Russian: D 294)

(3e) Comparative forms that imply negation

(3e1) Formulae rather ~ easier..., than... comparisons:

Rather a black crow will turn white than that he will speak the truth (Yakut: Em. 98); Rather you will find a horse with horns here than that you will earn a coin (Tamil: VA 7); *Enne võid kohata sarvedega kassi kui õiget poissi* [Rather you will meet a cat with horns than the right boy] (Estonian: KM); Rather you

will get milk from a hen than that you will get anything out of him (Tatar: Br. 491); *'Tis easier to draw a fart from a dead ass* (English: T F63)

(3e2) Formulae of the type ...is (like)...; as (right ~ little ~ rare ~ difficult) as ...; ...or... that contain a general or specific 'comparison' (sometimes an equation is also possible):

As rare as a white sparrow (Latvian: FS 1627, 3038); *As rare as a black swan* (English: T S1027); Ain't any – just like camel horns (Turkish: Br. 538); *As scarce as hen's teeth* (American: Cal. 70); *That is as true as that the Cat crew, and the Cock rock'd the Cradle* (English: T C37); A woman's wit is shorter than a frog's tail (Chechen, Ingush: Br. 607); *To be as true as that a frog is hairy* (English: T C37); *Just kui vanakurat niidab sigu – enam kisa kui villa* [Just like the Devil shearing pigs – more noise than wool] (Estonian: KM); *See on seapügamine* [That is pig shearing 'a pointless story, something that cannot be achieved'] (Estonian: KM; cf. also EV 8357); *Как от козла – ни шерсти, ни молока* [Just like from a billy-goat, neither wool or milk] (Russian: Ruk. 54; D 631; Rybn. 52 and others *passim*; Latvian: FS 1263, 711; Lithuanian: PP 353; Udmurt: Kral. 188); *To milke a bull or hope in vain* (English: T B714); As good as expecting to get milk from an ox (Yakut: Em. 193); As good as expecting to get (colostrum) milk from a wolf (Yakut: Em. 193); To trust a crazy man is as good as expecting to get buttermilk from a cock (Nepali: Br. 400); *O yht vaikkiat kon koerasen poikimine* [It is as difficult as a male animal giving birth] (Finnish: SV 849); You can wait like a ram can wait for a kid (Latvian: FS 1225, 12793); *Mi kukoil pilluu, se sinul syyvä* [As much as a cock has a cunt, that much you have food] (Karelian: KSp 196); *Tyttölapsen pittää hoastoa nii harvoa, ko lehmä pieryö* [Girl children should speak as rarely as cows fart] (Finnish: Sl 489); *I draw it from you, like a Fart from a dead Mare* (English: T F63) ³

(3f) Generalising formulae of the type *There is little..., It is rare..., It is difficult...* and others:

Weisse Raben sind seltene Vögel (German: B 454); *Weisse Raben und treue Freunde findet man selten* [You seldom find white ravens or true friends] (German: B 454); It is rare to find a white

sparrow (Latvian: FS 231, 3457; cf. also Livonian: LV 1030); *It is hard to make mutton of a sow* (English: T M1340); *Se on piäntä mitä kissa lentää* [It is only a little bit that cats can fly] (Finnish: Sl 328); *Se on pientä, mitä lintu pissii ja kananpoika aittaa särkee* [It is only a little bit that birds piss and chicks can smash down fences] (Finnish: Sl 328); *Kylä kehumista ja maho lehmä poikimista, sitä soap uotella* [Praise from the village and barren cows giving birth, you can wait (long) for that] (Finnish: Spk 96)

(4) Positive absurd formulae (which are to be interpreted as hyperbole)

(4a) Unconditional generalisations of the type: ‘Anything can happen under the sun, even the most unusual things’, ‘Everything is possible in the hands of God’, etc.:

Kaikki niit Jumalall on, kun kirpun siloja ja sian sarvii [God has all of them, flea harnesses and pig’s horns] (Finnish: Sl 88); *Muhoksella muutki kummat, sammakotkin sarvipäitä* [There are other oddities in Muhos, even horn-headed frogs] (Finnish: Sl 252); *Бывает, что и вошь кашляет* [It might happen that a louse will cough] (Russian: D 571); Even a barren cow will give birth to a calf (Udmurt: Kral. 190); If God so wishes it, then even a male animal will give birth (Persian: Krgl. 396; cf. also Krgl. 112)

(4b) The impossible becomes possible under auspicious conditions, for example, if you are rich, if you get money, if things go well, if God loves you, if you have the know how or are powerful. Here the zoological absurdity results in something useful. The most frequent nuclear figures are *an ox will give birth to a calf ~ will give milk* and *a cock will lay an egg*. The following are some examples with oxen:

Wem das Glück wohlwill, dem kalbt ein Ochse (German: B 300; cf. also B 207); *Кому наум, у того и бык доум* [Whoever is lucky, his ox will give milk] (Russian: D 72; cf. also Latvian: FS 464, 7681; Mordvin: Sam. 309; Georgian: Br. 205; Uyghur: SK 1751)

The following are some examples with cocks:

Wem's glücklich, dem legt ein Hahn Eier (German: B 120, etc.); *Где поведется, там и петух несется* [Where there is luck, cocks will lay eggs there] (Russian: Rybn. 110; cf. Ruk. 125, 142; D73). Also compare Karelian and Vepsan: PS 796; Komi: Ples. 125; Georgian: Br. 204; Turkish: Leb. 23; Aserbaidzhan: Gus. 27; Uyghur: SK 1752

These same figures also appear in sayings that begin with the formulae **He even has...** It is presumed here that we are dealing with someone rich and successful. For example:

He even has serpent horns 'about someone rich' (Tatar: Br. 493). About milking oxes and cocks laying eggs see also Komi: Ples.130; Hungarian: Nagy ö24; Tatar: Br. 494

There seems to be an eastern distribution for types like the following:

A rich man's cat can catch rabbits (Uzbek: Br. 586; cf. also Turkmen: Karr. 56; Uyghur: SK 1719); Whosoever is lucky, his dog will eat grass (whosoever is unlucky, his daughter-in-law will steal) (Kirghiz: Br. 276; Shamb. 165; cf. also Kazakh: Br. 233; Adyghe: Br. 34)

There is a typological relationship between group 3a2 with the following:

D'engal sua hos linnunmaiduo [With money you can get anything, even bird's milk] (Carelian: KSp 34); also compare: *Rahalla saa vaikka sarvipääkoiiriakin* [With money you can get even a horn-headed dog] (Finnish: Sl 363); *Oleval kaikki on, viäl sarvpäissi koeriki* [A rich person has everything even a horn-headed dog] (Finnish: Spk 184; cf. Sl 282)

Here are some further examples with other images:

Whom God loves, his bitch brings forth pigs (English: T G261); He can even get milk out of a dead ram (Aserbaidzhan: Gus. 107); He even knows how to shear serpents (Armenian: Br. 82). It is not clear whether the last two examples refer to great ability or great greed.

(4c) The impossible becomes possible when it is very necessary ~ when there is a pressing need ~ if you force it. The absurdities consist primarily of male animals giving birth, milk, or eggs:

Kun kovan näkee, niin koiraskin poikii ~ munii [When there are hard (times) to be seen, then a male animal will give birth ~ lay an egg] (Finnish: Sl 153; cf. also VKS 266); *Sonnikin poikii, kun kovan näkee* [Even an bull will give birth when there are hard (times) to be seen] (Finnish: Sl 414; cf. Karelian: KSp 357); *Hätä kun tuloo ni härkäki lypsää* [When there is real need, then you can milk an ox] (Karelian: KSp 88); *Mit Gewalt kann man wohl einen Bullen melken* (German: B 100); *Tiukka kun tulee, niin kukkokin munii* [When things get tight even a cock will lay an egg] (Finnish: Sl 40; cf. also Sl 153, 155); *Pakko gu pannah, kukoigi munii* [When it really has to even a cock will lay an egg] (Karelian: KSp 357); for other Balto-Finnic texts see also PS 705; When there is great need even a hen will fart (Latvian: FS 819, 803)

Eastern repertoires contain some sayings in non-proverbial form like the following:

Even compels male animals to give milk (Persian: Krgl. 293); He can compel a barren cow to have a calf (Tatar: Br. 488); He compelled a hen to pass water everywhere (Ossetic: Ab. 43) – if we presume that the activity above is resultative then these can be included in this group; otherwise they might possibly belong to group 2c2.

(4d) The impossible becomes possible if you really want it to. This group is represented by more eastern cycles of texts where male animals give milk (and milk products):

If the shepherd really wants to, he can milk the billy-goat ‘if you really want it you can get anything’ (Persian: Krgl. 233; cf. also Kurdish: Cel. 106, 264; Turkish: Br. 531; Ossetian: Ab. 93; Lesgin: Br. 350; Turkmen: Karr. 45); If the shepherd really wants to, he can get sour milk from the ox (Kurdish: Br. 332); If the shepherd really wants to, he can get butter from the ram (Armenian: Karap. [1] 25; cf. Shag. 53)

(4e) Humorous positive sayings about flightless animals actually flying can also occur. However the flying is ‘not quite it’. For example:

Tietysti kissa lentää, kun hännästä heittää [Of course a cat can fly if you throw it by the tail] (Finnish: Sl 134; cf. also Sl 114, 304); *Kyllä hevonenkin lentää, kun hännästä heittää* [Even a horse can fly if you throw it by the tail] (Finnish: Sl 44)

We also find ironic Russian statements with *бывает...* [it might happen that...]:

Бывает и медведь с кручи летает [It might happen that bears fly up the hill] (Russian: Rybn. 188); *Бывает, бывает и медведь летает, только не в гору, а под гору* [It might happen, it might happen that even bears fly, not up the hill but down it] (Russian: Rybn. 188)

(5) ‘Ill-omened’ (sinister) zoological hybrids constitute a separate group of exceptional material. Many of the examples included in this group have (or are presumed to have) their origin in religious beliefs, which makes it difficult to decide whether one or another of the animal figures (and sayings as a whole) is to be interpreted literally or metaphorically. This duality has actually been documented within the confines of one and the same typological unit.

On the most literal of surface forms, the dominant theme is one of **missing body parts on mean, ungainly ~ heavy animals** which somehow impairs their ability to move about and/or attack (compare here group 2c1 above). An explicit axiological modality occurs in very many generalising types of saying belonging to this group. The most basic of these are the following: (Note: in the following expressions *Z* stands for the animal and *S* stands for certain body part(s))

{A} *If... then...* (counterfactual) structures

{A1} If *Z* had *S* then it would do bad things

{A2} A *Z* says: ‘If I had *S*, I would...’ (this is why *Z* lacks *S*)

{A3} If *Z* were not bad ~ if *Z* were good, it would not lack *S*

{A/B} If God had given *Z S*, *Z* would do bad things

{B} structures with God as the operative agent, i.e. *God did not give...*

{B1} God did not give *Z S*, otherwise *Z* would do bad things

{B2} God forbid *Z* from having *S*, otherwise *Z* would do bad things

{B3} God (created *Z* but) did not give *Z S*

{B4} God knew *Z* for what it was and did not give *Z S*

{B5} It is not for aught that God did not give *Z S*

{B6} Luckily, God did not give *Z S*

{B7} If God gets angry he will give *Z S*

{C} Before it dies *Z* will grow *S*

Texts to illustrate the categories (from above) are set out according to various somatic and animal types. The number of the category is indicated in front of each example.

(5a) Horns

(5a1) Pigs with horns:

{A1} *Oleks seal sarved, ta kaevaks ilma lõhki* [If pigs had horns, they would dig the world to bits] (Estonian: EV 10358); *Кабы свинье рога, всех бы со свету сжила* [If pigs had horns they would destroy everything in the world] (Russian: D 130); also Finnish: SI 169, 404; Latvian: FS 120, 414; Ossetian: Ab. 38; {A2} *Tsiga ütelnü: “Ku mul sarvõ saava, sõs ma purõ ja poksi”, tuuperäst ei olõ tälle sarvi luudu* [The pig once said ‘If ever I get horns, I will bite and butt heads and that is why he was not given horns] (Estonian: EV 2566); {B1} God did not give pigs horns, otherwise they would turn the mountains up side down (Ossetian: Ab. 106); {B2} *Jumal hoidku seal sarvi pähe kasvamast, sarvedega lõhub taevast ja ninaga lõhub maad* [God forbid pigs ever grow horns on their heads, with horns they would destroy the heavens and with their snouts they would destroy the earth] (Estonian: EV 2566); cf. also Lithuanian: PP 246.

(5a2) Asses with horns:

{A1} If asses had horns, they would poke the world to bits (Aserbaidzhan: Gus. 104); If asses had horns, they would butt

their masters to death (Uzbek: Kal. [2] 332; cf. Abdur. 178); also Persian: Br. 416; Turkmen: Karr. 143; {B2} May God never give horns to asses, otherwise they would beat all the oxen (Pushtu: Br. 440); {B3} God created the ass, but did not give him horns (Tajik: Br. 452); {B4} God knew the ass for what it was and did not give it horns (Persian: Krgl. 185; cf. Br. 416; also Assyrian: Br. 93); {B6} Luckily, God did not give asses horns (Tajik: Kal. [1] 43; cf. Kal. [2] 331).⁴

(5b) Teeth

(5b1) Frogs with teeth:

{A1} Even the frog would start biting, if it had teeth (Bengali: Br. 125)

(5b2) Cocks with teeth:

{B2} *Jumala, varjele vaara karjasta, kannuksia kanan jalasta, kukon suusta hampahita* [God forbid that danger should come from the herds, spurs from the heels of hens and teeth from the mouths of cocks] (Finnish: VKS 442)

(5c) Serpents with legs:

{A3} If serpents had been good, they would not have their legs in their bellies (Kurdish: Cel. 215; cf. Cel. 280); {B3} God did not give serpents legs (Kurdish: Cel. 332); {B4} Knowing well the heart of the serpent, God left it without legs (Amharic: Br. 44)

(5d) Wings

(5d1) Cats with wings:

{A1} If cats had wings, they would catch all the birds (Lesgin: Br. 349; cf. Naz. 64; 140); If cats had wings, we would not know the word 'sparrow' (Turkish: Leb. 53; cf. also Dargin: Br. 207; Kurdish: Cel. 340; Persian: Br. 420); {B2} May God never give cats wings, otherwise they would destroy all the birds (Pushtu: Br. 440); {B5} It is not for aught that God did not give cats wings (Pushtu: LJ 38)

(5d2) Tigers with wings:

{A1} If tigers were to grow wings, there would not be any people left in the world (Tajik: Kal. [2] 331)

(5d3) Camels with wings:

{A1} If camels had wings they would wreck their own rooves (Uzbek: Kal. [2] 332); {A/B} If God had given camels wings, there would not be a roof left unbroken (Aserbaidzhan: Gus. 121; cf. also Uzbek: Abdur. 178)

(5d4) Ants with wings:

{B7} When God gets angry with ants, He gives them wings (Kurdish: Cel. 331); {C} Before they die, ants grow wings (Aserbaidzhan: Gus. 78; cf. also Ossetian: Ab. 94; Adyghe: Br. 34; Lak: Br. 343; Dargin: Br. 211 and Naz. 64; Pushtu: Br. 437)

(5e) Frogs ~ toads with tails:

{B1} *He дал бог жабе хвоста, а то бы она всю траву попортила* [God did not give toads tails otherwise the grass would all be ruined] (Russian: Rybn. 79; cf. D 837); {B5} It is not for aught that God did not give frogs tails, nor asses horns (Uyghur: SK 104)

(5f) Blindworm with eyes

The eyes of blindworms appear in our corpus only in the Finnic materials (see PS 503). The sayings seem to be of a mythological nature, but their original literal meaning seems to have been later reinterpreted metaphorically (see especially the last example in this section):

{A1} *Oleks vasklikul silmad, siis ta paneks ühel ööl üheksa ust kinni* [If blindworms had eyes, in one night they could close nine doors] (Estonian: EV 13883); *Vaskuss sööks kõik inimesed ära, kui ta nägija oleks* [Blindworms would eat up all humans if they had sight] (Estonian: EV 13885); *Vaskitšul ku olis silmät, yheksän muaman lapset itkettä* [A blindworm, if it had eyes, then nine mother's children would cry] (Karelian: KSp 560; cf. also KSp 431); {A2} *Vaskuss on öelnud, et "Kui ma näeksin..., siis peaks iga*

päev kirikukell ja raudlabidas helisema” [The blindworm once said: ‘If I could see... everyday church bells and iron shovels would ring out] (Estonian: EV 13884); {B6} *Sidä on Jumal häästi teht, et ei ole vaskussile silmi pähä loond* [It was good that God did not put eyes in the heads of blindworms ‘A bad person’s opportunities are always limited’] (Estonian: KM; cf. EV 13882)

(5g) Sayings about crowing (singing) hens constitute a non-somatic exception here. They have a wide base in religious beliefs, and may also have been transformed through metaphor to represent ill-boding attempts by females to rule. Their membership as zoological hybrids is problematic to the extent that hens can crow. Some examples are as follows:

As vague omens of misfortune:

He κ добру курица петухом запела [It bodes no good when a hen starts to sing (crow) like a cock] (Russian: D 637; cf. D 483, 947; also compare Gagauz: Br. 184; Korean: TKKCh 14; Japanese: Petr. 82; Vietnamese: IGV 51)

As an omen of death to the hen itself:

A crowing hen calls misfortune onto its own head (Udmurtian: Per. 167); When a hen starts to crow, it will be taken to the ground (Aserbaidzhan: Gus. 96; cf. also Russian: D 848, 947; Finnish: Sl 158)

Accidents in the home:

Unlucky is the house where the hen crows (English: T H778; cf. also German: B 260; Finnish: Sl 59; Japanese: Fount. 389; Ovambo: Kuusi 420)

Women whistling or girls laughing can be seen as a parallel tradition among Balto-Finns in saying of a disapproving nature such as:

Naesterahva vilistamine ja kana laulmine kuuldakse põrgusse ära [A woman whistling and a hen singing can be heard in Hell] (Estonian: EV 3124); *Piiän nauru ja kanan laulu ei tiejä hyveä* [A maiden’s laughter and a hen singing will not bring good] (Finnish: Sl 333; see also PS 256)

Just as we saw with zoohybrids, so too here, in addition to the basic forms, there is also a myriad of less productive and exceptional contextual types to be found clustering around zoological absurdities. We have passed over these in relative silence. There is a danger that our corpus is too sparse to give an adequate picture of the frequency with which sayings of this sort occur.

Zoological absurdities might actually be much more frequent in Wellerisms, of which we have only a few Finnish examples:

Kaikki niit näke ko vanhaks tule – jo sarvpää koeriakki! sanos keriläinen ko pukki oli portim piäles liakas [You can see it all when you get old, even horn-headed dogs, said the beggar when the ram was tethered to the door frame] (Finnish: Spk 295); *Ei siit tul mittää, saano Someron äijä ko härkää lypsi* [Nothing's going to come of this said the Old Man of Somero as he milked the ox] (Finnish: Spk 380); *Otin vähä kumminkiin, sano kuahari kun emusen kuahitti* [I took a bit just in case said the castrator when he castrated the sow] (Finnish: Spk 320)

We have saw in examples above where two zoological absurdities can become reciprocally contaminated. Zoological absurdities can also be intensified and reduplicated in other ways as well. They can be combined with non-animal absurdities, etc. For example:

Kaikkie sairahan mieli tegöö, kun tiinehen kanan pieruo [That sick (person) would like to have everything, even a pregnant hen's fart] (Karelian: KSp 446); *Pigs fly in the air with their tails forward* (English: T P312); *Собака летела, ворона на хвосту сидела* [The dog was flying, the crow sat on its tail] (Russian: D 206); *На море овин горит, по нему медведь летит* [A barn burns on the sea, that is where the bear flies] (Russian: D 206); *Деревянный горшок да свиной рожок* [A wooden pot and pig's horns 'dowry'] (Russian: D 365)

Bird's milk appears in Estonian proverbs about non-existent things (EV 3929) along with *cat harnesses*, *sleigh grease*, *roots of rocks*, and *branches of water*. Compare these, for example, with Latvian *water that can dream* and *rocks with blood* (FS 220, 1405), or for example, Karelian *mushroom seeds* (KSp 47).

Two impossibilities can stand in a quasicausal relationship to each other, for example:

Коли найдешь у коровы гриву, так и у кобылы будут рога
[When you find a cow with a mane, then a mare will also grow horns] (Russian: D 848); When bears get thumbs, let dogs carry guns (Yakut: Em. 192)

Products can be made from non-existent animal raw materials such as ropes made from pig wool in very many Finnish texts (see SV 18, 212, 506, 611, 805) or Karelian spoons fashioned from pig horns (see KSp 249), Udmurtian felt slippers made from serpent wool (see Per. 200). Attempts are made to catch billy-goat milk in sieves (see German: B 89; English: T R27 and others). Things can happen to non-existent body parts, such as a horse whose horns can fall off due to sever cold (see Hungarian: Nagy 11672). And many other things can happen, too numerous to speak of here. ⁵

The ‘classical’ somato-physiologic absurdity itself can dissipate and disintegrate step by step in many different directions as they approach other subject clusters. Let us briefly mention some of these directions.

1) If we had really wanted, we could also have included among negative expressions with absurdities those paradigms where some body part is missing but the animal is able to fulfil required functions:

Birds do not have udders but they can still feed their chicks (Mongolian: DR 62); Serpents have no legs, but they can still move; fish have no ears, but they can still hear; cicadas have no mouths, but they can still chirp (Japanese: Petr. 87)

We also have examples where the animal might possess a body part but is incapable of fulfilling the required function with it. For example, sayings about flightless ostriches even though ostriches have wings (Latvian: FS 1263, 1041), or one function might be fulfilled but another one that is associated with the same thing is not: *Juo kukkokin, muttei koskaan kuse* [A cock drinks but never pisses] (Finnish: VKS 181 and others *passim*; cf. Karelian: KSp 131; Latvian: FS 512, 165)

These however, do not fit within our ‘narrow parameters’ anymore.

2) Absurd things can be associated with dead or unborn animals. For example:

An unborn rabbit under a nonexistent bush (Kumyk: Naz. 56); Ripped the leg off an unborn rabbit (Turkish: Br. 540); The owl that died last year raised its head this year (Tatar: Br. 492)

3) We also have common international oxymoronic proverbs, in which a false notion is created about the location of organs involved in animal products or the way these products are extracted, along with concomitant associations of the movement of these products along wrong channels in the wrong direction, such as:

Die Kuh milcht durch den Hals und die Hühner legen durch den Kropf (German: W II 1668 and others; also compare Finnic: PS 59; Hungarian: Nagy sz91); *У коровы молоко на языке* [Cows have milk on their tongues] (Russian: Rybn. 43 and others *passim*; cf. also Komi: Ples. 91; Udmurtian: Kral. 98; Armenian: Shag. 390; also found in Central Asian sources).

4) The flying abilities of flightless zoological absurdities are in an associative relationship with a variety of types of absurdities such as ‘the wrong animal or bird in a tree’. We also encounter other clusters such as ‘a wrong animal in the wrong trap’, ‘a wrong animal in the wrong stall ~ roosting perch’, etc. This gives us the general paradigm of ‘an animal in an absurd or unusual location’. In turn, they merge with materials centred on the animal and its territory, its ‘own element’, nest, home, etc. Let us just mention one example of each animal we have in our corpus that can/cannot dwell in a tree or climb there:

Ei koiru puuh piäse, hos kynnet ollah [A dog will not get into a tree though it has claws] (Karelian: KSp 182); *Orih oksal magua, oraval kynnetäh* [A horse is laying in a tree, a squirrel is ploughing (the field)] (Karelian: KSp 338); When an ox climbs a tree, it is getting work done (Ossetian: Ab. 37); A ram does not know how to climb trees (Chinese: Tishk. [2] 40); *Kurg läheb harva puu otsa, murrab jalaluu katski* [Cranes very rarely go in a tree, they will break a leg otherwise] (Estonian: EV 4580); Quails do

not sit in trees (Ossetian: Ab. 94); When tortoises start climbing trees (Malayan, Indonesian: Br. 365); Climbed up a tree to catch toads (Vietnamese: Br. 169); It is not a serpent if it climbs a tree (Zulu: Br. 221); When fish climb poplar trees (Turkish: Br. 531)

In proverbs many other silly things can be done with animals. They can be given the wrong kinds of food (for example, hay is fed to cats ~ hens ~ geese); inappropriate animals can be saddled or harnessed (the widest international distribution is exhibited, for example, by the pairing up of pigs and saddles, either in comparative or negative structures or in some other form); we also find the relationship ‘animal/human’, where by analogy ‘human food is given to the animal’ or ‘an animal wears human clothing’; these in turn can be treated as subsections of a more extensive paradigm ‘animals are treated like humans’ (see chapter 3 above), and so on, and so on.

A comprehensive typology of proverbs and sayings does not exist. If anything, we merely have an impossibly tangled web of material as was apparent from the present descriptive overview of just two zootropic knots. In any case, it is quite clear that the density of matter in different parts of the paremiological universe can vary and often quite extremely. Paremiologic theory has not yet been able to explain why this should be so. Presumably, however, the explanation for such a phenomenon is not going to be found on the basis of the usual typologies. Whatever else, any theory needs to unify all the facts; those both below the typological level as well as above it. One promising approach seems to be some sort of lexicon of images.

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Comments

¹ If we overlook the fact that many of the animals that have been translated simply as ‘wolf’ in the present corpus may in reality be ‘red wolves’ (*Cyon alpinus*) then in proverbial animal pairs, next to the pair ‘cat – mouse’, the pair ‘wolf – sheep’ globally represents one of the most prevalent, if not the most prevalent, of dominants. These two pairs, in their absolute frequency of occurrence, seem significantly to exceed other generally known stereotypes (dog – cat, dog – wolf, and, quite common in eastern repertoires, horse – donkey, as well as others). Zoohybrid forms constitute only an insignificant part of the totality of the ‘wolf – sheep’ combination.

In this group are such locally or even internationally widely distributed items such as the following clusters and types: Placing a wolf as a shepherd ~ letting a wolf among the sheep (see also Kok. 114; PP 569; Arth. 720); When the wolves have fed then the sheep are safe (see also PP 570); A wolf will eat even a sheep that has been counted ~ will not eat a sheep that has been counted (see also PS 201; Kok. 269; PP 581; Arth. 721); Whoever is afraid of wolves should not keep sheep; Whoever is with the wolves will kill sheep; Whoever is with the master will mourn the sheep ~ hunt the wolves; Do not think your enemy among the sheep, think him among the wolves; Whoever spares a wolf will harm the sheep (see also Kok. 144); The death of a wolf is life ~ health ~ joy for the sheep; Whoever makes like a sheep, will be eaten by the wolves (see also Arth. 1036); A wolf will always find an excuse when it wants to eat a sheep; No matter how many shepherds ~ masters, the wolf will still eat sheep; and many others.

² The paradigms (1) through (6) as well as many others also have parallel variants where the combinations involve not just purely zoomorphic oppositions but zooanthropomorphic, zoothomorphic, zoodemonomorphic, zoobotanomorph and other ones as well. (Instances where the animal component is missing altogether have not yet been systematized, although they also occur).

Compare for example the following:

(*1) A priest as far as the face goes, as far as the deed go, a wolf (Georgian: Br. 196); In word, a do-gooder, in deed, a deadly viper (Mongolian: Br. 391); Buddha's tongue, but a serpent's heart (Japanese: Br. 635); Inside a serpent, outside like the Candle of God (Yakut: Em. 45)

(*2) *Рожею хорош, а умом тетерев* [As for the face, beautiful; as for wits, a grouse] (Russian: Ruk 34); In height like a palm, in intelligence like a lamb ~ goat (Arabian: Sharb. 15 and 20)

(*3) Voracious as a caterpillar, but works like a cripple (Arabian: Sharb. 13); A glutton at eating, but at work a worm (Komi: Ples. 73)

(*4) Benkei (a hero) at home, a mouse outside (Japanese: Fount. 727); At home a brave man, but in the woods a rabbit (Tamil: VA 37); At home a lion, in the battlefield a coward (Tajik: Kal [1] 230); *Kyläh hyvä, koen kontijo* [Good in the village, a bear at home] (Finnish: Spk 20); *В людях Илья, а дома – свинья* [Иlja – 'a saint' – when with people, but at home a pig] (Russian: Ruk. 139 and passim)

(*5) *Mies mennessään, koira tullessaan* [A man when leaving, a dog when returning] (Finnish: VKS 179)

(*6) *Молодец на овец, а против молодца и сам овца* [A good man toward the sheep, but a sheep himself toward another good man] (Russian: Rybn. 76 and many others, *passim*)

³ With this group and the next one, i.e. the formulae *as few (as)*, *as rare (as)*, *as difficult (as)* and other such quantified expressions containing zoological absurdities, the problem of alethic interpretation crops up. When, for example, it is stated that something is as difficult as a male animal giving birth to young, are we to take this as a hyperbole, i.e. does it mean ‘it is very difficult’ or does it mean ‘it is impossible’ (because, of course, a male does not give birth)? Bearing in mind the general character of the logic in proverbs, it might be just as well to say that this is simply a pseudoproblem. Parem logic is bivalent, but it seems more reasonable to interpret these differently, i.e., not as rigidly black-white, but rather more naturalistically on a scale from light to dark grey; not ‘always/never’ but ‘usually/rarely’; not ‘includes completely/excludes’ but rather ‘encourages/hinders’; not ‘do it unconditionally/never ever do it’ but ‘try to do/refrain from doing’ and so on. The sentence *A sharp axe will **always** find the stone* is perhaps rhetorically more intensive than the sentence *A sharp axe finds the stone* but it seems rather pointless to speak of differences here from the perspective of any logical quantification. The sentence *You are stupider than a goat* might be rhetorically more intensive than *You are as stupid as a goat* but there is no reason to be discouraged by the seemingly paradoxical situation where $A = B$ and $A > B$ are synonymous. It makes no difference whether our so-called hyperbole extends all the way to America or goes 20 miles beyond America. It means ‘very far’ either way.

⁴ Images consisting of *the horns of mean cows ~ rams ~ goats*, which fall outside the realm of zoological absurdities, nevertheless merge with the types of saying found in group {B1}. For example: *Kaevaja lehmale ei loo Jumal sarvi* [God will not give horns to a goring cow] (Estonian: EV 2908); *Ylpeälle lehmälle ei Luoja sarvia kasvata* [God will not grow horns onto an arrogant cow] (Finnish: 566; cf. SI 196, 350); for other Finnic texts see PS 258; cf. also Latvian: FS 1627; English: T G216; Russian: Ruk. 44 and others; D 130 and 838; Rybn. 89; Udmurtian: Per. 156; Kalmyk: Br. 236; Yakut: Jem. 125; Georgian: Br. 187; *Puskijal oinahal ei Jumal ole sarvilo andanut* [God did not given horns to a butting ram] (Karelian: KSp 405); *Jumal ei loo kurja kitsese mitte sarvi* [God will not give horns to a mean goat] (Estonian: EV 2908)

⁵ At every point new direction open up. For example, the motif here can be looked at in terms of hyperbolic paradigms about very cold weather. Finns and presumably other peoples have saying where freezing weather (often personifications of January boasting to February, or February to March) dreams of freezing a man’s piss into an arch, or a woman’s hands onto the

kneading board, a dog's claws into the threshold, a calf into the belly of the cow, a colt into the belly of the mare, a piglet into the teats of the pig and so on (see for example Estonian: EV 8190; Finnish: SI 37, 222; SV 542; VMP 48; Karelian: KSp 65, 289, 542, 560; also compare Hungarian: Nagy b1074). Invariant 'operations (such as freezing to death, eating up, ripping out, tempting out) with fetuses (either calves, colts, and others)' in turn appear, for example, in hyperbolic sayings about excessive greed, ability to steal, grouse lying, ability to convince others and other linguistic abilities as well as other unspecified abilities (see for example numerous Hungarian texts: Nagy b1085, b1088, b1089, t218, t219; cf. also Estonian: EV 5588 and Wied. 131; English: T C18). The total set of images used to represent these desires and talents is enormous.

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